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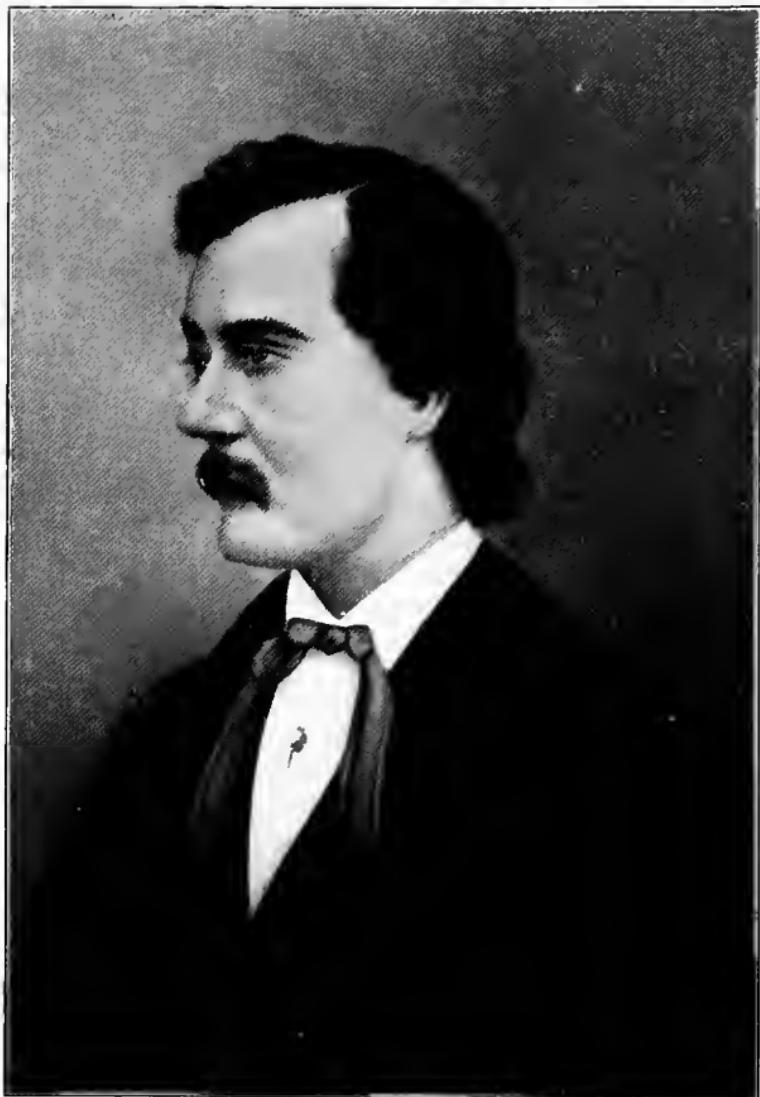
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George C. Ogden

AGED ABOUT 24

Poems
George Campbell Ogden

EDITED BY
CHARLES H. FISK



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LAURA LOUISE OGDEN WHALING

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THIS COLLECTION OF POEMS IS
PUBLISHED IN
Loving Remembrance of the Author
BY HIS DEVOTED SISTER.

*Six feet of earth and a blanket of snow
Cover all of our errors, but heal not our woe.
May green be the turf that now covers thy grave!
May the birds warble there, their sweet songs!
May the heart that once throbbed o'er a physical grief
Have been stilled by its Maker and preserved by its God!*

L. L. O. W.

George Campbell Ogden

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH BY THE EDITOR

GEORGE CAMPBELL OGDEN, the author of the poems in this compilation, was the son of Samuel Ogden and Mary Barr (Campbell) Ogden.

He was born at Mt. Auburn, Cincinnati, Ohio, March 10, 1841.

Through his mother he traced his ancestry in an unbroken line to Robert Bruce, King of Scotland (1306-1329), of whose history it would be a work of supererogation to speak in this connection.

His maternal great-grandfather, Francis Campbell, married Elizabeth Parker, daughter of John Parker and his wife, Margaret McClure.

The McClures and Parkers as well as the Campbells, one of whom was the mother of the subject of this sketch, were of royal descent.*

One of his maternal aunts was Mrs. Maria McCune Barr Bigelow, of Cincinnati, Ohio, so well and favorably known in that city and vicinity.

His father, Samuel Ogden, was of the eighth generation in line from John Ogden, known as

* See "Americans of Royal Descent by Charles H. Browning—Sixth Edition, Philadelphia, 1905: Pedigree CIII."

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“The Pilgrim,” and was born at Elizabeth, New Jersey, on July 18, 1803, where, on October 17, 1839, he married Mary Barr Campbell, daughter of Ebenezer Campbell and Ellen (McCune) Campbell. She was born at Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, May 14, 1818.

Samuel Ogden began life as a carriage builder, in New Jersey, and prosecuted that business with success. A little later he removed to Cincinnati, Ohio, and for a time carried on a manufacturing business. In a short while, however, he began to deal extensively in real estate enterprises, and extended his operations not only to the territory in and around Cincinnati, Ohio, but in Indianapolis, Indiana, and Chicago, Illinois. His every movement seemed to have met with great success, and he amassed a large fortune.

It has been recorded of him that:

“He was a man of marked integrity, charitable in his contact with all men, helpful to the weak and worthy, and especially to young men just starting in business. His life was more eloquent than his words, and his death was deeply lamented by all who knew him.”*

He went to his final reward on February 9, 1881.

Three children, two sons and a daughter, were born to him and his wife: George Campbell Ogden, the subject of this sketch; Charles Augustus Ogden,

* The quotations and historical data as to the Ogdens are from “*The Ogden Family, Elizabethtown Branch, by William Ogden Wheeler, 1907.*”

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who was born August 13, 1843, and died August 14, 1877; and Laura Louise Ogden, born June 26, 1846, who, on February 6, 1867, married William A. Whaling, who was born at Keeseville, New York, and died in Chicago, Illinois, May 24, 1874.

She thereafter married John A. Trimble, of Cincinnati, Ohio, a lawyer, from whom she was subsequently divorced, and permitted by the court to resume the name of her former husband. Mr. Trimble died about a year later in Algiers.

Mary Barr (Campbell) Odgen survived her husband and the second son. She entered into rest April 26, 1889.

John Ogden, known in history and records as "The Pilgrim," ancestor of this Ogden family in America, was born in Bradley Plain, Hampshire, England, September 19, 1609, where he was married, on May 8, 1637, to Jane "*(Jaan)*" Bond, daughter of Jonathan Bond. Three children were born to them in England, the last two being twins.

Early in 1640, John Ogden, with his wife and children, emigrated to America, and landed (probably) at Southampton, on the southern shore of Long Island. On April 17, 1640, a tract of land, known as Shinnecock Hill, adjoining Southampton, was granted to him. He soon became very popular and prosperous, and acquired holdings of valuable real estate in and about Southampton.

He and his brother Richard were builders of the "Gov. Kieft's stone church" at New Amster-

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dam, constructed in 1642 in the Fort, pictures of which are still in existence.

In 1650 he was chosen one of the "Freemen" of Southampton.

In 1659 he sat in the General Court as representative of Southampton, and in 1661 in the Upper House, in which he sat at subsequent periods.

After he had reached fifty-four years of age, and had spent twenty-four years on Long Island, he determined to move to New Jersey, and began disposing of his realty on Long Island. He was named one of the "patentees" of "Elizabeth Town," New Jersey.

Record of "The Pilgrim's" public life and doings may be found in "*Hatfield's History of Elizabeth.*" He held many important posts and offices under the crown and royal authorities.

He was made "Deputy Governor" by Gov. Carteret, by a commission dated November 1, 1665,

"And in the Seaventeenth yeare of the Raigne of Our Soveraigne Lord Charles the second, king of England, Scotland, ffrance & Ireland, Defender of the Faith."

"The new town (Elizabeth) being so auspiciously begun on the broad foundation of fraternity and justice, John Ogden laying the chief corner stone, many colonists were soon attracted by its exceptional privileges and advantages."

He participated in almost, if not every, matter of importance relating to the town and govern-

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mental affairs from the time of his arrival in New Jersey until his death.

In 1668 he was chosen one of the burgesses. After the Dutch had retaken New York, in July, 1673, the English colonists had much trouble with their former Governor, and John Ogden and others "petitioned the Dutch for a hearing, upon which the latter granted the colonists all their former privileges."

On September 1, 1673, he was made "Schout," or sheriff, of six towns.

Upon a re-establishment of the English government, by a treaty of peace with the Dutch at Westminster, England, February 9, 1674, all captured territory was mutually restored, and the Dutch were superseded by the English at New York in November following.

By reason of a new patent granted by the Duke of York to Sir George Carteret, the latter was invested with sole power "to settle and dispose of the country (East Jersey) upon such terms and conditions as he shall see fit."

The grants issued to the colonists by the former governor, Nicolls, were claimed to have been thus rendered null and void, and the settlers were compelled to apply for new surveys and patents for their lands, at which they were greatly incensed.

"Good old John Ogden" was the very last to submit to this arbitrary ruling, and his application was made as late as October 29, 1678.

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I join in the following commendation of "The Pilgrim Ancestor:"

"Let every one of his numerous descendants be devotedly grateful that his illustrious ancestor, John Ogden, displayed more manly courage, possessed better moral fiber, and had a purer quality of patriotic blood than any other man in East Jersey."

His last will and testament was made December 21, 1681, and he passed over the dark river about May, 1682. I can not better close reference to this strong and energetic character than by quoting the panegyric taken from "*Hatfield's History of Elizabeth*, and from a disinterested pen," summing-up the life of this remarkable man:

"And now 'good old John Ogden,' whose wanderings for forty years had justly entitled him to rank with the 'Pilgrim Fathers,'—the acknowledged pioneer of the town, in whose house the first white child of the settlement was born, the accepted leader of the people, a pillar in the Church and in the State, honored and trusted by all, . . . lies down and dies; leaving the impress of his political and religious principles, not only upon his children, but upon the community that he has so largely aided in founding. A man he was of more than ordinary mark—a man of sterling worth; of whom the town, as well as his numerous posterity, should be gratefully mindful. He was called a 'malcontent,' and regarded as 'the leading malcontent of Elizabeth Town;' but surely the man that was held in such high esteem by the accomplished, sagacious and pious Winthrop—the

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man who, both at Southampton and here (Elizabeth) had been an honored magistrate, loved and trusted by the people, and, during the Dutch rule, the virtual Governor of the English portion of the Province, is not to be ranked with restless agitators because of his persistent opposition to an arbitrary government. A true patriot, and a genuine Christian, he devoted himself while living to the best interests of the town, and dying bequeathed to his sons the work of completing what he had so fairly and effectually inaugurated—the establishment of a vigorous plantation founded on the principles of civil and religious liberty."

And well did those sons and their descendants, through many generations, discharge the honorable duties so committed to their hands.

The surviving sister of the author of the following poems, by whom the same are now published in loving remembrance of a deceased brother, is the last of the family. She has no children, and with her this immediate branch of the Ogden family will end.

The children of Samuel and Mary Barr (Campbell) Ogden were doubly Ogdens, as Ezekiel Ogden, of the sixth generation from John Ogden, "The Pilgrim," married Abigail Ogden, also of the sixth generation from said John Ogden, and thus the two, the husband and wife, went back to a common ancestor.

"Charles Augustus, the second child (as above named), was educated and trained as a chemist, and acquired great proficiency in that department

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of science, but he did not long apply himself to that subject.

"He was a man of great versatility of genius, and was an adept at art, poetry, and music. He was specially skillful with the violin, and became very popular because of his talents and acquirements."

He never married.

The father, two sons, and daughter possessed the happy faculty of expressing their thoughts in poetry.

In an "Appendix" to the poems of George Campbell Ogden, I have thought well to insert a poem written by Samuel Ogden, the father, and entitled "The Meteor Steed;" and also the following poems written by Charles Augustus Ogden, the brother: "The Death of Lincoln;" "To Ida S.;" "Intemperance;" "Lines" (adaptation of Ben Boldt); "Prayer for an Easy Death;" and "John C."

George Campbell Ogden was prepared for college in the school of Eben S. Brooks, so well and favorably known to early citizens of Cincinnati, and by private tutors. He attended Miami University, at Oxford, Ohio, and graduated there in 1863.

At that famous and historic institution he was well and favorably known by faculty and students.

He and the writer of this article were classmates and friends.

At college he was attentive to duties—was

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gifted in mathematics—was known and recognized as a poet of marked ability. He was especially fond of classics and the Greek and Latin languages, and was given to delving into mythology and putting the old myths into verse after his own manner. His capacity and versatility in all these matters were duly appreciated and are shown by the classical poems and translations in this compilation.

He was chosen as the poet of the Junior Class, and the poem read by him on the occasion of the "Junior Exhibition," October 18, 1861, "*Reflections on History*," has been considered one of the best poems ever written by a student at Miami University.

To be selected as an "Orator" or "Poet" of a Junior Class at Miami University was considered the highest honor which could be conferred upon a member of the Junior Class.

After graduating at Miami University, our poet attended the Ohio Medical College, and graduated therefrom and received his degree of M. D. in March, 1866.

He was interested in chemistry and in the theory of medicine, and gave much time and thought and study thereto, and had he been compelled to give attention to the practice of medicine and the development of chemical science, he would undoubtedly have attained a position of eminence and distinction in the medical and scientific world. But he devoted himself to such studies as mat-

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ters of pleasure and personal gratification, and, in this way, secured for himself that satisfaction which results from a pursuit of study and research simply for the delight of the investigator and not for the purpose of making money or adding to his already ample store of ducats.

He was an artist of recognized ability. He painted many oil paintings of much delicacy and merit, some of which were sold at large prices. A few of them were given by him to his sister, by whom they are retained and cherished with devotion.

He sketched beautifully with the pen, and some of his writings are specimens to attract attention and comment. His pen and ink sketches were beautiful in design and artistic in finish.

He was an adept in stenography, and often wrote poetry in shorthand. Some of his shorthand work can scarcely be distinguished from copper plate.

He remained a bachelor during life. He had passed the allotted threescore and ten years when, on December 1, 1911, he lay down in the slumber of death.

The poems here presented were compiled with care by the author in a book left with his sister, and she believes it was his wish that she should publish them. Hence this edition of them.

The poetical fire became developed in the author of these poems at an early age, as will appear by

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the dates upon some, among the best, of his productions. Certainly, some of them were written when he was less than thirteen years old, and the last of them was written when he was not more than twenty-eight.

As a friend of George Campbell Ogden, it affords me pleasure, in obedience to the request of his devoted sister, to supervise the editing of the poems so assembled and left by him.

It is to be regretted that (in two or three instances) some of the best of the poems have not been entirely finished, at least that no more of them has been found than is published in this edition of his poetical works.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Chas. H. Fisk", with a small double quote mark underneath the "s".

Covington, Ky., March 1, 1912.

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Night

THE night has come, the silent night,
With shadows cold and gray;
Low in the West, the lingering light,
Uncertain, fades away.
So sinks the tide of life before
The cold, dark flood of death,
And such a gloom is gathering o'er
When yields the parting breath.

The stars come out, with silver hue,
O'er heaven's arching dome,
And glimmer in the depths of blue
In contrast with the gloom.
So are the lights that Faith has placed
To guide us thro' the grave—
They twinkle over Jordan's waste,
Reflected in its wave.

The night will hold her reign awhile,
In awful gloom and shade,
But morning soon again will smile,
In majesty arrayed.
So to the traveler thro' the tomb
Its morning ray is given;
For shines, o'er Jordan's chilling gloom,
The golden dawn of Heaven.

Spring

THE robes of winter, chill and pale,
Dissolve before the breath of spring,
And music in each spicy gale
The feathered warblers bring.

Behold the flowers that late were dead,
Reclining, withered on their frozen bed,
In sweetest beauty spring to life,
And round, their ethery fragrance shed,
With health and beauty rife.

The streams, bound fast in winter's hold,
Have broke the tyrant's icy chains,
And gleam, like threads of winding gold,
O'er many a flowery plain,
Whose incense breath intoxicates the brain.

The early insects, in their wanton flight,
Their airy pinions to the beam unfold.
They sparkle with an iris light
Inlaid with powdered gold.
Soft vermil Phoebus dares to throw
His arrowy light on Morning's dews.
Each pearldrop, like a prism, breaks the glow
Into a thousand mingled hues.

Lo! where the lovely, modest lily blooms,
Within the lone, sequestered vale,
And spreads her velvet, rich perfumes,
Enchantress to the nightingale.

THE LILY

He spreads around that lonesome dell
The wildest strains of music's spell.
The truant schoolboy lingers long
Within the wildwood's dark recesses rude
To hear the wildbird's evening song
Amid the dreary solitude.
Earth seems to be an altar broad
Returning blessings to her God.
The humblest flower, that lifts its head,
The valley to enliven,
Its fragrance on the winds doth shed,
Returning thanks to heaven.
Rock, river, bird, and tree
Appear in praise combined.
Man, wrapped in the philosophy
Of his presumptuous mind,
Takes showered blessings every day
With far less gratitude than they.

1854

The Lily

THE lily seeks the lonely vale,
In solitude to bloom,
And when the rays of Summer fail,
The earth becomes her tomb.

'T is thus that many a noble mind
Is left to weep alone,
Who, if fair Fortune had been kind,
Would not have sunk unknown.

Musings

'T is sweet, upon some grassy mound to lie
To see the clouds sail thro' the sky.
'T is sweet to see their golden gleam
In the fading daylight's beam.
When, in the burning west, a pile
Of clouds receive the sun's last smile,
I love far o'er the west to gaze
Behind his half-extinguished blaze,
Among the fleecy mountains there,
And picture them some region fair,
Where spirits, freed from all distress,
Dwell in eternal happiness,
And the deep vault, like an azure sea,
Engirdles their shores eternally.
And, as I strain my weary eyes
To pierce the depths of yonder skies,
Wish that I only were a dove
Thro' realms of upper air to move,
That I might reach that airy shore
Where death and sorrow come no more.
Alas! Alas! It is not given
For man to tread the clouds of heaven;
No wings are his, to leave the plain,
Stern Fate compels him to remain.
But when the shades of closing night
Withdraw the fairy scene from sight,

ODE

And dews, condensing from the air,
Fall damp and chill upon me there,
And earth grows dim, I rouse and see
'T is some deluding reverie.

1856

Ode

A CLEAR DAY IN APRIL.

THE ruddy morning rises
With gold and purple ray,
And shades of night departing
Reveal approaching day.
How bright the trembling sunshine
Gilds yonder hills of blue;
No vapor dims the azure sky
Or clouds the distant view.

But yesterday was dreary,
Incessant fell the rain,
We feared that lovely Summer
Would never come again.
'T is thus the clouds of sorrow
O'er shade our weary way,
Behind them lurks to-morrow,
More lovely than to-day.

1858

The Drunkard's Tomb

IT was a sad and mournful tomb
Where the drunkard's corpse was laid;
No cyprus shed a somber gloom,
His resting place to shade.
But, from the sod, grass-grown and green,
By its delicious clusters bent,
A humble twining vine was seen,
A strange but fitting monument.
Struck by the sight, I drew more near
To see what could be meant
By this wild vine, thus blooming here,
With Summer's fruit so bent.
I wondered much, but, raised my eye,
The mystery was clear,
And as I gazed I drew a sigh,
For misery lay here.
On a green stone, by sculptor traced,
His epitaph thus read:
"Beneath this earth a wretch is placed,
Below this vine he rests his head.
Like thee, O Passer! he was gay,
His sky was bright and fair
As Heaven on a sunny day;
Nor Trouble's clouds were there.
Once, in a lordly hall, was he,
With comrades, blythe and gay;
He mingled in the general glee
And grew as blythe as they.

THE DRUNKARD'S TOMB

At last, the poison wine was brought,
So tempting to the look,
And when they him to drink besought,
The draught of death he took.

That was the draught that pierced his soul
For, from that fatal day,
He was a tippler at the bowl,
And Honor stole away.

But why delay the mournful tale?
O, Passer! do the lesson prize!
Advice of friends could not prevail,
And in the grave he lies.

A fearful legacy he left—
A curse upon his name;
His youthful wife of hope bereft,
His children's lot is shame.

He was his aged father's light,
The bright reward of all his cares.
That father grieves in Sorrow's night,
With furrowed brow and silvered hairs.

His life, in mourning, hastes away
O'er him he sought to save;
He loathes the cheering light of day,
And wishes for the grave.

His tender mother, his best friend,
Who led his steps in early youth,
Oh! who can her dark sorrow end,
Or who her anguish soothe!

HYMN

O, Passer! shun the magic bowl;
Unnumbered ills its bliss attends;
If not for love of thy own soul
In pity for thy friends!

1856

Hymn

I STOOD within the valley's shade,
When spring had robed the earth around
And the gentle streamlet made
A dewy moisture o'er the ground,
And the dark trees seemed to say,
God is in the valley gay!

I wandered by the caverned shore
That scowls upon the boundless sea;
I heard the sweeping billows roar,
And fancied that they spoke to me,
Like hollow voices from the grave,
God rules the ocean's lonely wave!

I stood upon the desert waste,
Trodden by no foot of man
Save the Arab's, in his haste,
And the weary caravan.
And loudly roared the rising blast,
God is in the desert vast!

1858

Alt. *Sinai*

How dark the gloom that veils the brow
Of Sinai's holy hill,
Where God to Moses, filled with awe,
Revealed the tenets of His law
And taught His sacred will.
There, from the burning bush of flame,
The mandates of Jehovah came.

That land that once was holy ground
Is holy now no more;
The heathen bows, in fear profound,
By Akuba's misty shore.
Nor softly, in the sunny air,
Is heard the voice of Christian prayer.
Instead of this, the Muzzien's strain
Is heard, at evening, on the plain,
Calling the faithful, with measured tone,
To bend in prayer to Allah's throne.

185

Christian Prayer

NO MORE is heard that heavenly strain
From darkened Judah's fair domain,
And all that Bethlehem's prophets told
With God's commands, are laid aside.
The truths Messiah did unfold
Are scattered far on Jordan's tide.

First of May

PEEPING, with an amber light,
From beneath the folds of night,
Rises up the golden sun,
And the merry May's begun,
While, with incense on her wing,
With her comes the lovely Spring.
Round her feet, in circles, lie
Green flowers as she passes by.
She spreads, with her benignant hands,
An emerald carpet o'er the lands;
And, mingled with its brightest green,
The diamond dews of night are seen.
She drives the clouds from off the sky,
And weaves the azure vault on high.
From the boughs of some old tree
The birds sing out so merrily;
From her high nest on the wall
The swallow pipes his welcome call;
The flowers that died the former year
Above the green earth reappear,
With opening buds, to meet the sun,
O'erjoyed to find the Spring begun.
From blowing bud to blooming tree
Wings his way the busy bee,
From everything extracting honey,
Singing while the days are sunny,

FIRST OF MAY

And gathering in his sweetened store
Of food for Winter's stormy hour,
When winds are cold and tempests lower.
Not so, those gilded flies that play
And glitter in the blaze of day.
They think not, like the toiling bee,
To lay up stores for scarcity.
They sparkle, for a little while,
In the Spring and Summer's smile;
Then Autumn comes, with chilling frost,
And all their golden glow is lost.
And then I think, with thoughtful mind,
How beings of a nobler kind,
Like these ephemeral insects, play
As if to idle time away.
Those youthful hours are spent among
Gay Pleasure's thoughtless, giddy throng.
While Fortune wreathes her treacherous
smile
They glitter for a little while;
But life is short, and years will glide,
Like some swift river's dashing tide,
Whose hurrying currents onward flee
And mingle with the boundless sea.
Old age arrives, slow, creeping on,
And all their golden glow is gone,
And clouds eclipse their Fortune's ray;
Ah! then, like these, they pass away.

1857

Kill or Cure

A SHARPER's son was ill one day,
And so he sought a doctor's aid.
But I must not forget to say
 He first a prudent bargain made:
And, in a clear, plain speech, he said
Unto the man to physic bred:
 "If you will save my dying son,
A thousand pounds you will have won;
But if you kill him, all the same,
A like amount you then may claim."

The doctor unto this agreed,
Resolved to ply his utmost skill—
 To cup, to blister, and to bleed,
 To purge and drug, as the case might need
And everything but kill.

And so he worked from day to day,
 And used his best prescriptions,
Gave herbs prepared in every way,
 And pills of all descriptions;
And long, with esculapic art, he tried
To save his patient, but he died.

When three months' time had rolled away,
The doctor came again that way:
He rung the bell, as doctors will,
And Sharper took the offered bill;
And, glancing over it his eye,
Gave an unstudied, cool reply:

FRAGMENT

“You want your fee, but did you kill my
heir?”

“No, indeed, to that I’ll swear!”

“Well, then, you did not save him.” “Very
true!”

“Then you have no title to
The payment that I promised you.”
And, mourning o’er his loss of pay,
The man of physic went his way.

1857

Fragment

PALE midnight frowned upon her throne,
For she was empress there, alone,
Of earth and sea and sky.

On the hill, or the plain, not a sound was
heard—

Not the boding voice of the woeful bird
By whose cry the midnight air is stirred,
Nor the bacchanal’s shout of revelry.

But the soft wind gave a gentle sigh
That sounded along so tunefully,
And the stars looked down from the sky;
Their pale light fell on each winding stream,
With a lovely ray and a tender beam,
And the heaven was blue as a running stream,
When the season of Summer is nigh.

1858

House Cleaning

THERE is a season in the year,
House cleaning time, by women hight,
A time that has no spark of cheer,
For all are in a brawl or fight;
The men from home betake to flight.

The excited dames keep up a wordy war,
Now rail at this, and then at that.
The frightened dog is fled afar;
And e'en the soft furred, velvet cat
No more will 'tempt the kitchen's yielding
mat.

The husband's shirt is gray and foul,
No white spot on its bosom seen;
And in his coat peeps many a hole
Thro' which his vest of blue or green—
No matter which—shines forth unclean.

The red-armed women come to wash,
The tubs with foaming suds they fill,
And then, with sturdy arms, they dash
The compound over sash and sill
In such a way as best befits their skill.

Poor Bill! he stays away from home,
And tries to swim or fish the time away.
Not near the house the dames will let him come,
Condemning him outside to stay
Lest he should soil the paints in play.

EVENING THOUGHTS

When Amie's sweetheart comes at night
 He finds the chairs and table overthrown
Scared at the sight, he takes his flight,
 And leaves the worried girl alone,
Who well can tell why he has gone.

Oh dreadful time! how glad we are
 Your advent comes but once a year.
Evil, indeed, must be the star
 That rules when thou art near,
Thou time of brawls and desolation drear

1

Evening Thoughts

WHEN daylight's glory disappears,
 And evening rises in the West,
The ills and woes of other years
 Are heavy in my breast.
I see how full of blame and strife
 My youthful days have been,
And I resolve my coming life
 Shall be unstained by sin.
But when the rosy morning's light
 First casts its cheerful ray,
Those sad'ning visions take their flight,
 And melt in air away.

The Rose and Evergreen

A ROSE TREE of celestial hue
In a monarch's garden grew;
With graceful curve it bent its head,
Glittering with Aurora's red.
Brightly fair and sweet it grew,
Watered with ethereal dew,
And its balmy fragrance shed
On the winds above its head.
Not a tree, or flower, there,
With it, in beauty, might compare.

The idler and the passerby
Looked on it with admiring eye,
For the king had taken care
To water it and give it air.
When easy countenanced Morning came,
With lips of song and eyes of flame,
He drew aside its tender sprays
Into the warm, life-giving rays.
Each day it gained a redder hue,
And further still its fragrance threw
And throngs of idle flatterers drew.
Above her rosy, glowing crown
The nightingale would perch him down
To pour his loud angelic strain;
But when the Morning came again,
And ruddy Phoebus lit his light
Emerging from infernal night,

THE ROSE AND EVERGREEN

He flew away; but still his song
Was not so loud, or clear, or strong
As it was in repose
Near his own beloved rose.
But this everlasting crew
Of friends and flatterers, she drew,
Soon made her ladyship so vain
That at length she scarce would deign
To view the flowers that bloomed around
In that garden's royal bound.

Close by the rose's side was seen
A humble, modest evergreen:
Self-company alone was hers—
She had no gaudy flatterers.
The eye, in that low, graceless tree,
The rose's charm could never see.
Too low to catch the summer gale,
Its leaves no fragrance did exhale.

This groveler soon caught the sight
Of the rose's eye of light.
Filled with contempt, she turned her head
And, to the humble shrub, she said:

“Who placed thee here so near to me?
Was I born for such company
As thee, poor fool, or such as thou,
Who lie forever scorned and low,

THE ROSE AND EVERGREEN

While round my head the soft winds play,
Sighing through my every spray,
And strive, with softening songs, to move
And melt my spirit into love?
There's not a breeze but what will scorn
To sweep the earth where thou wert born.
No beam of sun will visit thee,
But look how many visit me!
How many lovers canst thou boast?
Around me crowd a ceaseless host.
I do not heed the sunbeam's kiss,
Nor mournful robin's soft caress;
Nor the gay lark, whose pinions rise
At morn to trace the azure skies.
The sweetest warbler of the vale,
My plighted, love-lorn nightingale,
Thinks but of me, and only me,
And pours his soul in melody.
'T is he that wakes these nightly strains
That echoes o'er these lovely plains.
If a poor fly, or wandering bee,
By any chance should notice thee,
Your vanity is unrestrained,
Believing that a beau is gained.
Where is thy incense to arise
And bless yon heaven-framed dome, the skies?
While every bird can tell the tale,
How I, with fragrance, scent the gale,
Thou canst not boast a single charm,
While all concenter in my form."

THE ROSE AND EVERGREEN

She ceased haranguing, choked with pride,
While thus the evergreen replied:

“No charm like those, I own, have I,
Which in your figure I descry;
No friend or flatterer can I call,
Neglected and despised by all;
But know thou this, real modest worth
Is seldom courted here on earth:
Internal, hollow, and outward show
Admired are by most below.
But listen, I will make thee see
The difference 'twixt thee and me.
When Winter comes, with frowning skies;
When o'er the earth the tempest hies;
When murky clouds are dark above,
And silence reigns through hill and grove;
When songsters all have left the vale,
And gone thy boasted nightingale,
All fled away to other lands
To sing their songs on warmer strands,
Thy nightingale will soon alight
Upon some other favorite.
While Winter spreads his spotless robe
On all this quarter of the globe;
When, with heavy drifts of snow,
The garden trees are bending low,
And flowers, wreathed in Summer's light,
Are covered with a shroud of white,

To S— R—

Thou, in that dreary time, shalt die,
Low, with thy fellow flowers to lie;
I, with greener leaves, will bloom,
While thou art mouldering in the tomb,
From the dust of thy descent
To draw my own chief nourishment."

No more the prophetess did say,
The rose, affrighted, turned away.
And when the North began to blow,
And fell from heaven the flaky snow,
Oh! then the rose was lying low,
While, above its frozen tomb,
The amarynth puts forth its bloom.
It may be seen this very day
By him who journeys on that way,
With leaves that never will decay—
Although a graceless, ugly tree,
The type of immortality.

To S— R—

My love has come from a Southern clime
Her hair is black as a coal;
Her eyes are dark as the midnight moon,
And flash with a fiery soul.

Her face is swarthy, and it seems so sad
When the smile has faded away,
Like a murky night, and a cloudy sky,
After a sunny day.

The Storm

Now April comes on rapid wing,
The second month that marks the Spring.
She brings with her a chequered sky,
Where lights and shades alternate fly.
One moment, all her skies are clear,
The next, black clouds are lurking there.
And I have thought the life of man,
Since first his weary days began,
Was marked by every changing dye
That glows on April's fleeting sky.
Sorrows and joys successive sway,
The heart now mourns, and then is gay.
The gloom, his fainting spirit wears,
Is poured out with his falling tears.
And so, from early childhood's happy age,
Thro' all his weary pilgrimage.

All Nature's face is bland and fair,
And ruddy Phoebus gilds the air
Above, a realm of azure blue
Where space alone obscures the view.
A gentle breeze arises now,
Refreshing to the heated brow,
For we, who thro' the live-long seven
Remain confined, from morn till even,
Amid the heated city's glare,
Hemmed in by brick and mortar there,

THE STORM

Must feel, when we can breathe the wind
For but one hour unconfined,
As if, for once in life, that we
Knew what was meant by liberty.

The wind increases, growing strong,
Huge clouds of dust are borne along;
The forest roars with southing sound,
The lowest branches sweep the ground.
Small, straggling, fleecy clouds appear,
Dark, sailing on the atmosphere,
And, fast increasing in their size,
They quickly mount the western skies,
Till their awful shade is spread
To the zenith overhead,
Where, with curtains dark and dun,
They shade from sight the lurid sun.
From the ocean, now so dull,
Seeks the shore the startled gull;
The petrel leaves her rocky home
And hovers o'er the hissing foam.
From forest gloom the beasts of prey,
Awed by the darkness, glide away.
Tho' in the night they roam for food
Through all the confines of the wood,
Yet this darkness hath a shade
Which the fiercest makes afraid.
The lion, of the shaggy dress,
Terror of the wilderness,

THE STORM

Leaves its lonely walks to hide
In his lair unoccupied.
The bird, that all day loves to sing,
Flies away on skulking wing,
And hides within her leafy nest,
With silent throat and quiet breast;
And, in her airy cradle rocked,
She hears the tempest wind unshocked.
The white cap waves begin to sweep
And race along the leaden deep
Till their curling crests they pour
In hollow thunder on the shore.

On the Heaven the wind god stands,
Wreaths of vapor arm his hands;
His eyes with livid lightnings glow,
And earth hangs trembling far below;
A roaring cloud he makes his car,
And rushing winds his horses are,
While, now and then, his fearful hand
Sends bolts of thunder on the land;
Hurls crags and mountains from their seat
And lays them prostrate at his feet.
Beneath his courser's feet the forests fly,
And crackling branches sail the sky.
From the green earth, fresh and fair,
The oak is hurled aloft in air,
While, rushing on the deluged plain,
Descend whole torrents of sluicy rain.

THE STORM

The lightning burns with fitful glare,
The bursting bolt is heard in air,
Echoing thro' the desert sky
Till 't is lost in vacancy,
To the empyreum's gale
Seeming to reverberate.

There is a tower, whose lofty brow
Is far above the plain below;
The watery clouds are thickly spread
In whirling folds about its head.
Two gloomy clouds, in upper air,
Proceed to dreadful battle there:
Dark-edged, with hues of purple lined,
And skirts far tossing on the wind.
Each, frowning stern, selects his place—
The lower holds the middle space.
The dart is cast: the lightning flash
Is followed by the thunder's crash.
The huge pile trembles, totters, falls—
The vaulted rooms and marble halls,
Dashed into atoms by the blow,
With grinding thunder rush below.
What was the work of many years
Thus in one moment disappears.

Dark night comes on adown the west;
The sun is hastening to his rest,
And thicker darkness hurries on
To reassume her ancient throne.

THE STORM

The pale moon hides her troubled face
And glides, unseen, thro' empty space.
No star or planet dares appear
The dreariness of night to cheer.
Nor does the wind assuage its wrath,
But rushes swifter on its path.
It roars around the mountain peak,
Then, dying low, it seems to speak,
Like restless spirits moaning low,
The sad complainings of their woe.
And thro' the long night, dark and drear,
Loud crackling noises strike the ear
As some tall monarch of the wood is riven
By the red-burning bolt of heaven;
Or else some rock upon the mountain's crest
From its firm fastenings released
By the floods of falling rain,
Rolls down in thunder on the plain.

From the tall hill's craggy brow
Descend the rapid torrents now.
Shoal rivers are to oceans swelled,
And valleys are with water filled;
Stables and barns away are torn,
And, on the gushing currents borne,
Oxen and sheep do onward glide
And vainly struggle with the tide.

The bull, who, but one week ago,
Rushed thro' the valley to and fro,

THE STORM

Uprooting ground and bush and briar,
His eyes lit up with angry fire,
And, conscious of superior might,
Defied his enemies to fight—
Hath breathed his last, and even he
Now rushes headlong to the sea.

Nor doth destruction only seize
On sheep and oxen, barns and trees,
But, in this elemental strife,
There is a loss of human life.
Mark, where that lonely cottage stands
Far out upon the bottom lands,
When morning's dawning light shall rise
It will not meet the gazer's eyes,
But, in its place, alas, will be
A lonely void, a desert sea,
Which shall roll on, with ruthless waves,
Above its inmates' wat'ry graves.

Nothing can be, in earth or air,
But what there is a story there.
That wind must be extremely ill
That blows unchangingly to kill,
Or rushes past us and is gone,
Nor brings a joy to any one.
Such wind hath never blown on man
Since first the turning sphere began.
And e'en this tempest and this flood
Hath brought to some its share of good.

THE STORM

There is a cliff, whose stony sides
Are hollowed by the dashing tides,
For it hath felt the restless spray
Till e'en the rock is worn away.
The surface of the sea is spread
A hundred feet beneath its head
When skies are blue and calm; but now
The mountain billows lave its brow.

Upon its top (a barren spot)
There stands a lowly fisher's cot.
A pensive youth, a sunbrowned man
Are lodgers in its little span.
The last was robed in garments rude
As best befits the solitude:
The youth, athletic in his frame,
Was to appearance much the same.
He was a youth, as fresh and fair
As ever breathed the mountain air,
As ever trod the sounding shore
To hear its foam-capped billows roar.

For a long and weary while
He hath known nothing more than toil.
To guide the skiff or frail canoe
Along the ocean's surface blue,
The gale-inflated sail to set,
And how to cast the dripping net
To trap the dwellers of the flood,
Was all that either understood.

THE STORM

But memory, wrapped in mystic gloom
Displayed to him a former home.
His mental eye could almost trace
The outlines of his mother's face.
It seemed, too, that he could recall
An ancient pile, a marble hall.
How different, now, this savage cell
Where he, in luxury, used to dwell.

Of all that he remembered there,
A little girl, with auburn hair,
Most filled his spirit with despair
For what his spirit loved the most
He deemed was but "the loved and lost."

The magnet, placed in Southern clime,
Where Spring and Summer fill the time,
Heeds not the fragrant breezes there,
Nor all the charms of earth or air,
But points its index finger forth
Towards the ice engirdled North.
So, oft, he turned his wandering brain
From thoughts of sorrow, but in vain,
For memory would but recur
To dwell with her, and only her.

'T was in December, cold and drear,
The stormiest month of all the year,
That, in the midnight's fearful gloom,
A gallant vessel found a tomb

THE STORM

Beneath the sea; and all her freight
Of mortal spirits shared her fate.
Both his parents then went down,
And he himself was almost gone,
Had not this fisher come to save
And snatched him from the frozen wave.

Thus his memory flew back
All along life's dreary track.
His eyes bent on the flickering lamp,
With its hazy glow in the night air damp,
And sad his face appeared to be,
For his was a mournful reverie.

But hark! it is a distant gun
From the open sea—another one!
The youth sprung to the old man's bed;
He laid his hand upon his head:
“Volta! Volta! awake and dress,
I fear a vessel is in distress.”

Volta left his couch of rest,
Like the startled bird of the wilderness.
He left the lamp-lit, cheerful room,
Rushing into the solid gloom.
A blinding flash fell on his eye,
Unlike the lightning of the sky,
And a cannon boomed above the tide—
“Bring fagots here!” the old man cried.

THE STORM

The driest wood is brought, and thrown
On the cliff's cold, dampened stone,
A lofty pile; the match is struck,
The lighting sticks begin to smoke,
Until the flames begin to creep,
Like shining serpents, thro' the heap.
Hotter still, they burn and rise,
And cast their sparks against the skies;
And clear they glare, while, all in vain,
Upon them beats the drifting rain.
And their yellow lustre glowed
Far out upon the frothing flood,
And Volta saw a distant speck
On the broken waves—a mastless wreck.

But, near the rock, upon the flood,
With rapid oars, a life boat rode,
Upon the billows, lifted high,
At times it catches Volta's eye.
It sunk beneath the yawning caves
(The valleys t'wixt the mountain waves);
When it rose, its crew was gone—
The life boat floated all alone.

The youth beheld, amid the storm,
By the fire's light, a human form.
It was near the rock, and it rose and fell
With the water's wild, inconstant swell.
'T was human, he knew, and he could not see
A being sent to eternity,

THE STORM

Without a moment to prepare
For another world, and a judgment there;
And the passive, still, and dead-like form
Thus dashed at the mercy of the storm,
He firmly resolved should never drown—
He would save its life, or lose his own.

.

He threw his varnished coat aside
And fearfully gazed upon the tide.
'T was a dreadful thing to dare!
He felt that the chill and restless wave
Would be, at best, but a cheerless grave—
He could not slumber there.

.

Volta beheld him headlong go
Into the dark abyss below,
But his cold, white lips were mute,
And he shook with cold from head to foot,
As he never had shaken till now,
And the clammy sweat came over his brow
He tried to move, but he thought his foot,
In the solid flint, had taken root.

.

Ode

I ASK not for the shining spoils
Of Ceylon's azure sea,
From Jennie's radiant face, a smile
Is quite enough for me.
The wealth of far Golconda's mines,
Where, darkly, lone, the diamond shines,
Might tempt me; but, to her,
The riches that are buried there
Would hold no glory in their glare
Were they not shared with her.

1858

Lines

I WALKED the grass of early Spring,
When first its greenness shone.
In Autumn, 't was a withered thing
With all its beauty gone.
I saw the brook, in Summer, glide
With silver-gleaming glare;
But Winter, with her frosty gloom,
Soon wove her fetters there.
So, brilliant is the prime of Life,
Its every promise fair;
Old age displays another scene—
Of Trouble, Grief, and Care.

1859

Two Men of Honor

CANTO FIRST.

I.

PARNASSIAN MUSES, favor my designs!

'T is of no common theme I write,
But one which could be made to shine
In all the colors of the rainbow's light
If Genius rose and handled it aright.

II.

My scene lies in a Southern clime,
Where the gold-gleaming orange glows,
And the warm spice wind ever blows,
And it is Summer all the time;
Where, clear and blue, the tranquil ocean
flows.

III.

There, birds that never visit here
Sing lovely carols in the forest shades,
And the blue sky is ever clear,
And Nature's greenness never fades
Off from her own luxuriant glades.

IV.

Once, 'neath these overarching trees,
The camp fire of another race
Crackled and flickered in the breeze,
And flashed on each swarth warrior's face,
Who slumbered round it in that lonely place.

TWO MEN OF HONOR

V.

Here was their council, and yon mossy rock
Hath shook from its storm-worn sides
Eloquence, that well may mock
Any e'er heard beyond Atlantic's tides,
Whether from Cicero or Athens' prides.

VI.

They have departed, and are seen no more,
But the broad forest still remains,
And blooms as lovely as it did before
The white man crost the stormy mains
And drove the red men from their native
plains.

VII.

Enough! I must not stop to moralize
On Nature's beauty, or the Indian's fate,
Or Florida's triumphal skies,
Nor Alabama's cotton growing State,
Or other foreign topics, tho' they may be
great.

VIII.

There is a city on that rapid river,
Called "Mississippi," whose swift flow
Rushes and strives, with mad endeavor,
To reach the Gulf of Mexico,
New Orleans is its name, I know.

Two MEN OF HONOR

IX.

Her warf is stacked, for miles and miles,
With ships and boats of every kind,
Loaded with cotton, iron, or tiles,
And worked by steam, by oars, or wind,
Just as their first builders had designed.

X.

New Orleans is a town of trade,
And many build up fortunes there.
So, Mr. Argent, when he'd a million made,
Was satisfied—for more he did not care—
And went to live on Lafayette Square.

XI.

The house he dwelt in was of stone,
Which cost unmentionably high.
He liked no cheap stuff, and looked down
On those who to expenses had an eye,
Or practiced, in the least, economy.

XII.

He furnished it with all
That houses boast of in these modern
days,
And many a picture decked the wall,
One look at which excited praise,
Even from those to whom it was a maze.

TWO MEN OF HONOR

XIII.

From these, perchance, it may be thought
That Argent was a man of mind,
Which would be thinking him what he was
not.
He no enjoyments in the art could find,
His pictures were for show alone designed.

XIV.

He had a daughter, who could not be said
To be like him in anything.
She read Lord Bryon; and her young heart bled
When he of sorrow or distress did sing,
And teardrops to her eyes would spring.

XV.

In youth, she had been sent away
To get instruction at a boarding school.
Old Argent wept, but dashed his tears away,
For, unto him, it was a rule,
Thro' all distresses to keep cool.

XVI.

It was two months before the happy day
When Alice (for that was her name),
Accomplished, beautiful, and gay,
Should come again to that parental frame
(Sole cause of all its owner's fame).

TWO MEN OF HONOR

XVII.

(Oh Father! Thou who art so just and kind!
If I among the great am ever named,
May it be for some virtue of my mind.
I never, never would be famed
For lands I own, or buildings I have
framed).

XVIII.

(Yet some there are, and Fortune's hand
Hath richest blessings round them thrown,
And they are courted by the band
Of Fashion's may-flies; if their wealth were
gone,
Silence were theirs, and dark oblivion).

XIX.

He knew the glances of her dark brown eyes
Were stronger than the chains of fate.
"Her ears," he said, "were doomed to hear the
sighs
And listen to the promise great
Of many a kneeling profligate."

XX.

And he intended, soon as she came home,
That she should have her "bringing out."
He felt she'd throw all rivals in the gloom,
And let the city have a thing to talk about.

TWO MEN OF HONOR

XXI.

Oh' Beauty, thou triumphant queen!
Subjects refuse their sovereigns to obey,
Revolt, and civil feud are often seen.
Pale Goddess! when hath been the day
When men disowned thy gentle sway?

XXII.

And so he wished that day would soon come on
And thought that time was dragging slow.
The night is long to those who wait the dawn
But the gay revelers, ah! they know
How soon its hours of pleasure go.

XXIII.

But the bright hour came at last,
And with it Alice, and that night
Between Old Argent and his wife there past
What shall be soon revealed in light.
By Mrs. Argent, first, was silence broke
(A common thing with her), and thus she spoke

XXIV.

Dear husband, it is time we should prepare
To introduce our Alice to society,
For she is in her eighteenth year,
And we can do so with propriety.
She passed, with credit, her examination,
And she has finished all her education.

TWO MEN OF HONOR

XXV.

She writes with ease, in Greek and Latin,
And paints and draws, with exquisite taste,
And quotes Italian, which is soft as satin,
Speaks French and German just as fast
As if each were her native tongue,
And sings most beautifully for one so young."

XXVI.

Argent replied: "I know these things are true,
And my resolve, before you spoke, was made,
To bring her splendid powers into view.
We must not let her linger in the shade,
'T would be like hiding a clear, burning lamp
In some lone cavern dark and damp.

XXVII.

The winter holidays will soon be here,
With balls and parties, and all kinds of fun,
Then she shall make her debut in the sphere
Of Fashion, if it can be done.
And few there are, I dare aver,
In dazzling beauty, will compare with her."

CANTO SECOND.

I.

Pale, frozen monarch of the dying year,
Hast thou, at last, so soon returned?
The winds salute my list'ning ear,
And, where high Phoebus lately burned,
Dark, gloomy clouds of snow appear,
And Nature weeps with many a frozen tear.

Two MEN OF HONOR

II.

How silent, from the melancholy sky,
The cold, white flakes are scattered round.
Low roofs are spread, and turrets high.
The bent trees nearly sweep the ground.
Like some lone spirit's fearful cry
Falls on my heart the night wind's mournful sigh.

III.

And the last feeble light is gone,
The dusky twilight creeps upon the day;
The night of shades is hurrying on.
The crepusculum glows, with leaden ray,
Above the circle of the sun,
To show that icy Winter's reign has fully now
begun.

IV.

This nabob hurries thro' the street
To reach the hearthside of his home.
That pilgrim, with his unprotected feet,
Thro' the dark shadowy night must roam.
Hath he no friends, alas! to greet?
And, oh how weary! sleep would be so sweet.

V.

Child of Misfortune; he hath never known
A father's voice, a mother's loving smile.
No lisping prayer to God, from him, has ever gone.
His is a life of trouble and of toil.
Religion's flowers have never decked his
spirit's desert soil.

FRAGMENT

VI.

Child of Misfortune—But thy singer's strain
Must turn from all thy miseries away;
But he shall mourn for thee again.
His theme is now the rich and gay,
For these shall give his heart less pain
Than pitying thee, lone wanderer, when pity
is in vain.

VII.

And thou, pale Winter! wherefore do I sing
Of thy deep snows—and fleeting clouds?
Thy minstrel's life is in its early Spring,
He sees dead Nature in her spotless shroud,
And thinks of his own death, a bitter thing
To one whose spirit is as free as wildbird on
the wing.

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Fragment

THE black clouds gather on the sky,
Dark, sailing from the windy west,
And, piled in massive columns high,
Look down upon the mountain's crest.
Nature seems hushed, and all at rest,
No sound flies on the silent air;
The eagle seeks his rocky nest;
The wild beast hastens to his lair.

Reply to a Note

DEAR MAUD, your note of yestereve
I did, this early morn, receive.
The contents I perused with pleasure;
The love you sent, I deem a treasure,
And, with my pencil, briefly I
Transmit these few words in reply.

This sending love in notes Laconic
Is growing rather too Platonic.
You asked me how, and where, and when
We might meet face to face again;
Where we, in voice and language real,
May tell each other what we feel.

If we select a place to meet,
Don't let it be upon the street,
For there are many evil eyes
And tongues that love to scandalize.

There is a spot where, winding slow,
The brooklet's gentle waters flow
Amid a tract of level land,
Extending far on either hand,
So low and flat that every year
The rising floods submerge it there.

REPLY TO A NOTE

No foot of man encroaches there,
A settled silence fills the air,
Save when the whistling train goes by,
As fast as steam can make it fly.
By the old, fallen bridge of stone,
We there can meet and be alone.

You know the spot as well as I,
For it lies full before your eye,
Whenever, from your window, you
Toward the west direct your view.
Come at the hour of half-past seven,
When rosy twilight tints the heaven,
And daylight's latest glimpses fade
Before the night's approaching shade.
Next Friday eve, if skies are fair,
I will await your coming there.
Till then, I pray that Fate severe
May in no manner interfere.

July 14, 1869

Agib

LADY OF BAGDAD! if from thee
My griefs awaken sympathy,
If thou shouldst mourn the cruel fate,
Whose details I will now relate,
My highest wish in life is gained,
And all I hoped from Heaven obtained.

My father was a king, and I
Was reared in ease and luxury.
Till age had turned his temple gray
My father held his gentle sway.
His sceptre was his people's love;
He strove their burdens to remove.
He dried their tears and rendered less
Each mourning subject's sad distress.
For those in joy he had a smile,
Frank, sympathetic, free from guile.
For those in grief he had a tear,
And proved himself the friend sincere,
For, from his private purse, he drew,
Rather than ills should meet his view.
In my own land, I bore the name
Of Agib (not unknown to fame).
He died, and I, his only son,
Was placed upon his honored throne,
And, being anxious to survey
Some distant isles beneath my sway,

AGIB

I built a ship and, leaving all
Affairs within my capital
Under a trusty courtier's hand,
I left, awhile, my native land,
And, trusting fickle skies and seas,
Sailed for the distant provinces.

Heaven a prosperous voyage sent
Over the treacherous element.
The sky was cloudless, in its blue.
Old ocean's dark-cerulean hue
Was like a mirror; far and wide,
With sun-gilt ripples, shone the tide.

Such was our course; from isle to isle
We quickly past, but spent a while
In every one, for they were fair,
With forests green, and fragrant air.
Their people smiled to see my face,
From memory of my father's grace,
And many a wish I heard from them
That I, his son, might be like him.
My friendly crew, in pleasures gay,
Spent many a long and mirthsome day,
And many a sentimental night,
Beneath the moon's propitious light.
Wine, and the spell of Beauty's eyes,
Less truthful than inconstant skies,
Made each and all of them forget
Their troubles, gone or coming yet.

AGIB

But soon their fevered bliss was past,
For pleasure's dream must end at last.
A missive came, which did recall
The king back to his capital.
From the fair island's dark green side
Once more our vessel cuts the tide.
We fled before a favoring wind,
But many left their hearts behind.

But, sailing on our homeward path,
The tempest met us in its wrath,
And drove us, with its windy force,
Far distant from our chosen course.
Black skies and forked lightning's flash,
The howling winds and thunder's crash,
The roaring waves, so dark and drear,
And Nature's aspect sinister,
Made every sailor's heart of steel
A terrible emotion feel.
And even, I confess, I had
Foreboding of disaster sad,
And thought, with melancholy mind,
Of the bright home I'd left behind,
Where those I loved might mourn in vain
For him who ne'er might come again;
And my racked fancy gave to me
A frightful mass of imagery—
Of coral reefs, and polypi grim,
And monstrous forms in caverns dim;

AGIB

Of wasted jewels, scattered o'er
The dismal ocean's slimy floor;
Fragments of wrecks, in ruin strown,
And many a mouldering skeleton.
In fancy, I beheld my form
Struggling and sinking in the storm.
I thought how hideous fangs would tear
My quivering limbs, descending there,
While none would know of my last sleep
Save the lone Geni of the deep.
I thought of things more terrible
Than I can e'er find tongue to tell,
And all our crew, in their despair,
Besieged the throne of Heaven with prayer.
And Allah, from the highest Heaven,
Heard the sad cry. His grace was given,
And, from the perils of that hour,
He saved us by almighty power.

At last the stormy sky grew clear,
I saw the black clouds disappear,
And calmness settled on the deep.
The level waters sank to sleep,
But, far from off our pathway thrown,
We rested on a sea unknown.
Strange waters heaved their boundless tide
Around our bark on every side.
An unknown sky, above our head,
Its canopy of azure spread,

AGIB

And, when that sky grew dark in night,
Strange constellations gave their light.
It seemed as if the day star bright
Had lost a portion of his light.
Less fair the stars appeared to gleam,
Less gaily danced the rippling stream,
And all that once was beautiful
Became monotonous and dull.
Such is the mind opprest with woe,
So dark a halo it can throw
'Round all on which external sense
May exercise its cognizance.
The heaven, our pilot pondered o'er,
Yet these he had not seen before,
Although the stars were but a chart
That he had known from youth by heart
For he was master of his art.
He saw, displayed to him, a sky
Whose very light was mystery.
We could but trust to God, or chance,
Or both, to give His guidance,
For we were on the deep alone,
With every mode of reckoning gone,
And, if should lull the favoring gale,
And our supply of water fail,
Well did we know the cruel fate
That would o'ertake us, soon or late.
'T is hard enough, I thought, to yield
One's life upon the tented field,

AGIB

And perish by a foeman's hand,
Defending home and native land.
Such death is sad, but Honor throws
A golden halo round our close;
Our mem'ry in succeeding years
Shall be the theme of praise and tears;
Our ashes, in that glorious age,
The shrine of patriot pilgrimage.
To die from hunger and from thirst,
Of all Death's varied forms, the worst;
To wither slowly, day by day,
And pine in agony away,
Like the crisp plants that fade and die
Under a scorching Autumn sky;
To perish, and yet mark the glow
Of the cool, gliding wave below
Smiling in mockery, until we fain,
Mad with the fever of the brain
And goaded to delirious mood,
Would plunge into the briny flood,
As if it were a luxury
To drink one last, long drink and die.

Upon the far horizon's verge,
A dark spot rose above the surge.
This, when our skillful pilot saw,
His face grew pale with fear and awe:
"We all of us are lost," said he;
"Yon gloomy object in the sea

AGIB

Is the black mountain, huge and lone,
An isle of adamantine stone,
Whose powerful, magnetic force
E'en now directs our vessel's course.
The iron nails will all be drawn
Out of the ship ere morning's dawn.
Our craft will all fall into staves,
And we, the crew, find watery graves.
The mountain sides ascend so steep,
From out the bosom of the deep,
With rugged summits high in air,
That none may hope for refuge there."

Next day, the sad report proved true,
So near the fated vessel drew.
All happened as had been foretold—
The nails, attracted, lost their hold
And sought the mountain magnet's side.
The bark's loose fragments strewed the tide
And every friend I had, among
That lately gay and happy throng,
Sunk in the ocean's restless wave,
Now slumbers in a tombless grave.
But worthier spirits ne'er will tread,
Along Alserat's trembling thread
Above the fathomless abyss,
To kingdom of eternal bliss.

But fickle Fortune smiled on me
And saved me from that fatal sea.

AGIB

When I, exhausted, would have sank,
My weary arm secured a plank.
This held me up; the waters bore
My fainting figure to the shore—
And dismal was the prospect there.
Extending upward, high in air,
Arose the adamantine wall,
Slimy, unfissured, vertical;
Whose sides showed no projecting edge,
Unmarked by any friendly ledge
To give the climber's feet support—
The shrieking sea birds lone resort.
I heard their shrill and lonely cry
Ring through the melancholy sky,
And saw them wheel their circling flight
Around the rocky summit's hight.

I coasted 'round the mountain's base,
It seemed the same in every place.
Long hours passed away, and still
I found no spot accessible,
And deep despair came over me,
Reduced to last extremity.
When, suddenly, my searching eye
A narrow flight of stairs did spy,
And, from the flinty rock, they went
All winding up the steep ascent.

I blessed their aid, and did essay
The dangers of that narrow way.

AGIB

I found the steps at times so small
They scarcely gave support at all,
And, right and left, the smooth rock's side
Went straightly downward to the tide.
And, had there been the weakest breeze,
It would have whelmed me in the seas.
Thus laboring, to the top I went,
And reached it without accident.
There, on my knees, my praise was given
To Him who rules in earth and Heaven,
And tears of gratitude intense
I shed for my deliverance.

A brazen dome next caught my sight,
Built on the rugged summit's hight.
'Neath this, a brazen courser stood,
On which a brazen horseman rode.
Under this roof I laid me down,
And my hard pillow was a stone;
But never, in my life before,
Came sweeter sleep my eyelids o'er,
For weariness hath power great,
Beyond the strongest opiate,
And failing Nature's broken power
Demands, for sleep's restoring hour,
A little space to fill the void
Of vital energies destroyed.
With freshened life, from day to day,
Sleep ever combats with decay.

AGIB

Worn as I was, the flinty stone
Seemed softer than the cygnet's down.

I dreamed a dream: to me there came
A man of aged, tottering frame:
"Listen, unhappy prince," said he,
"To my directions unto thee.
When thou dost wake, dig up the ground
Beneath thee, and there will be found
One bow of brass, three darts of lead;
These take from out their hidden bed.
These arrows, from the buried bow,
Thou shalt against the statue throw.
The brazen man, as soon as struck,
Will tumble headlong from the rock
And sink beneath the unfathomed sea.
The horse himself will fall near thee,
Him shalt thou bury in the place
Whence thou didst take the bow of brass
And let the ground above his head
Be that which hid the darts of lead.
That action done, this island drear
Will in the ocean disappear.
The glorious fame will be thy meed
That thou, at last, mankind has freed
From this, the terror of the seas,
The nucleus of calamities.
And when the isle has sunk so low
That round thy feet the waters flow,

AGIB

Thou shalt perceive, upon the tide,
A skiff supported, near thy side.
Inside shall sit a man of brass,
With giant frame and hideous face.
Step thou within the boat, and he
Will row thee through the unknown sea,
And, when ten days are passed, will moor
His vessel to a distant shore,
From whence thou wilt, with ease, repair
To thy own land and kindred there.
But bear one caution in thy soul,
And keep thy tongue within control,
While gliding through the crystal flood
Forbear to speak the name of God.
In this command, if thou dost fail,
Thy evil genius will prevail,
And thou, so late from grief set free,
Will find a new calamity."

When I awoke, I turned my hands
To carrying out these dread commands.
I dug, and found the brazen bow
And the three leaden arrows, too.
I shot them at the horse of brass,
And the whole vision came to pass,
And each event it had foretold
I did, with wondering eyes, behold.
When I had filled the courser's grave
The island settled in the wave,

AGIB

And I beheld the heaving sea
Come near and nearer rapidly,
Until the mountain's topmost crest
Was level with the ocean's breast.
Nor failed my dream's prediction here,
I saw the expected skiff appear;
Within, a brazen oarman rode,
And dipped his paddles in the flood.
On board I stepped, and took my seat
In silence, for my awe was great.
I looked around, the isle was gone,
The trackless waters wandered on—
No land in sight, no mortal nigh,
Naught round us but the sea and sky.

I kept my last command with care,
No speech of mine disturbed the air.
Fearing that dreaded name might slip,
By chance, from my unguarded lip,
And that new ills on me would fall,
I did forbear to speak at all,
And felt that all my safety hung
Upon the stillness of my tongue.

Nine days, my grim companion rowed
The skiff along the briny flood.
Day and night, and night and day
His paddle held unwearied sway.

AGIB

The bending blades still dipped and dipped
Their mighty owner never slept.
His metal sinews, stiff and strong,
Drove fast the gliding bark along.

The tenth day came; its dawning light
Revealed an island to our sight.
I saw the green trees waving there,
On azure mountains high in air.
A sudden joy thrilled through my breast.
“God’s name,” I cried, “be ever blest.”
No more I spoke; the skiff was gone,
I floundered in the deep alone,
My brass companion disappeared
The instant that God’s name was heard.

My hapless fate I did bewail,
But yet my courage did not fail.
From youth, I had been taught to swim,
With ease, along old ocean’s brim.
So did I here, with skill and force;
For land, direct, I shaped my course,
And, after swimming many a mile,
I safely reached the gloomy isle,
Rejoiced, alive and well, to stand
Once more upon the yellow sand,
Where I had never hoped to be
Save when the wild surf of the sea
Should cast my lifeless carcass there,
To moulder in the wind and air.

AGIB

Scarce was I from the water clear
When I perceived a ship appear.
Her prow was turned toward the shore,
I knew not what, within, she bore,
And I, a stranger to these seas,
Might find them friends or enemies;
I could not tell, but felt a fear
At meeting with these strangers here.
A giant tree top I did climb,
And, seated on a shady limb,
Hidden from view in foliage green,
I watched the ship, myself unseen.

A group of slaves soon came on shore,
Each one of whom a shovel bore.
They dug beneath the very tree
Where I was hid so warily.
Next, came a man with silvery head,
And he a youth of beauty led.
Some slaves with these, whose strong arms
held
Large baskets with provisions filled.
And, when the digging was complete,
These all descended in the pit.
Not long did they protract their stay,
But shortly rose and went away.
Only the handsome boy remained,
By a strong load of earth detained,
For ere they went the slaves put down,
Above the cavern's mouth, a stone,

AGIB

And this, with sod, they covered o'er,
Till all looked level as before.
No sign was left to show that man
Had e'er been there since time began.
This done, they sought the ship again,
And launched upon the crystal main.

I came, when I perceived them gone,
From out my leafy covert, down.
The stone and earth I cast aside,
Beneath, a flight of stairs I spied.
When I descended these, I found
A rich apartment underground.
The Youth was sitting on a couch,
And started at my near approach;
He rose, and with a timid grace,
He bid me welcome to the place.

I caused his every fear to cease,
By offering to give release
To him, from such confinement vile.
On which he asked me, with a smile,
To sit down by his side and hear
The story of his young career,
And why, within this gloomy cave,
He dwelt within a living grave.

“My father, sir,” said he, “grew old
In trade, that filled his chests with gold,

AGIB

Until his riches grew immense;
Yet it had ne'er pleased Providence
To grant him a child to share
His vast estate, and be its heir."

"Well nigh had he despaired of this,
The climax of his earthly bliss,
When I was born. With joy and mirth,
They hailed my advent on the earth.
But soon, my father's boundless glee
Was overcast all gloomily.
Magicians came who told, for me,
My course through dim futurity.
My father's heart beat high with hope
When first they cast my horoscope,
And rent, with magic art, away
The veil from many a coming day,
And saw, with mental vision clear,
The long array of many a year.
This hope soon fled, a sense of ill
Began his very soul to thrill.
When he perceived the paling face
Of every wizard in the place,
He saw their reverend heads to shake;
It surely must be some mistake.
They try again; when all is o'er
The same result comes out once more.
My tale was told; let none deny
The ruling power of Destiny.

AGIB

And then, with solemn accents dread,
The master of Magicians said:
“Sire, from every evil clear,
Thy son will reach his fifteenth year.
That fatal birthday is to be
The crisis of his destiny.
If he unharmed, that dismal day,
Shall see its last beam fade away
Behind the mountains in the west,
By length of days he will be blest,
And he will have the privilege
Of calm contentment in old age.
But, at that luckless time, will be
A most tremendous prodigy,
The huge black mountain will sink down
By wandering Agib overthrown,
Who will, ere fifty days, destroy
The life of thy unhappy boy.”

‘My father’s heart was ill at ease
To hear these doleful auguries.
He built this subterranean cell,
Where I, unknown, might safely dwell,
About the time, my fifteenth year,
So big with fate, was drawing near.
As time passed on, it rendered less
His grief and his uneasiness.
But yesterday, by chance, he learned
That Agib, ten days since, overturned

AGIB

The brazen statue, and threw down
The mount of adamantine stone."

"To make my fifteenth year complete
Just forty days are wanting yet.
These things renewed his slumbering fear;
With utmost haste he placed me here.
Here I remain, with willing mind,
For Agib ne'er will think to find
His victim underneath the ground,
Within a desert island's bound."

When this fair youth had told to me
These details of his history,
With thrill of deep surprise, I learned
Myself so in his fate concerned,
And, in my heart, I did despise
Those odious readers of the skies,
Who dared predict my hand defiled
By blood of this poor, artless child,
Whose simple, mild, and winning ways
Had warmed my heart with friendship's blaze
I bid him cast aside his fear,
For danger ne'er could reach him here.
With him I offered to remain
Till he should be released again.
But I forebore, with watchful care,
My real adventures to declare.
From naught I said, could he divine
That Agib's fatal name was mine.

AGIB

My offer he with joy received,
And we, in that asylum, lived
Till nine and thirty days were past,
And now the fortieth came at last.
The youth rejoiced to think how soon
His days of danger would be gone.
He bathed, preparing to receive
His father, who would soon arrive.
Next, being weary, he reclined
Upon his couch, some rest to find.

While thus he lay, he did request
A piece of melon; I, the best,
At once picked out, but searched, in vain,
A knife to cut it, to obtain.
"There is one," said he, "above my head,
Just on the cornice o'er the bed."
I saw, and strove to reach it there,
With more of quickness than of care;
My feet were caught, alas! for me,
Fast in the tangled drapery.
Upon the unhappy youth I fell,
His breast received the fatal steel.
Into his heart the weapon passed;
He screamed, and sighed, and breathed his
last.

No power of language can express
My dreadful transports of distress.

AGIB

I beat my breast, I tore my hair,
I wept with sorrow and despair;
I flung myself upon the ground,
And rolled, as if in frenzy, round.

A calmer frame of mind returned,
Though still the sad event I mourned.
The blest reflection came to me
That I had urgent need to flee.
My case, were I discovered thus,
Would be extremely dangerous.
The father would full soon appear,
And should he find me lurking here,
And see his precious idol slain,
Expostulation would be vain—
The tempest of his wrath would shed
Its fury on my wretched head.

I left the cave; my footsteps pressed
Once more the green earth's blooming breast
It was high time, almost too late,
A moment more had sealed my fate.
For, as I looked toward the strand,
The vessel just had reached the land,
And the same group I saw before
Were disembarking on the shore.
I scarce had time to climb the tree,
Which once before had hidden me,
Ere the entire party stood
Around the underground abode.

AGIB

Their faces showed the signs of fear,
They saw some stranger had been here.
The slaves, in haste, descend the pit,
And, when they rose again from it,
They carried all that now remained
Of him, my late, unhappy friend;
And, in his breast, the fatal knife
That drank the current of his life,
Remained, for I had not had sense,
In my distress, to draw it thence.
At this sad sight, the father fell
Prostrate on earth, insensible.
The slaves, lamenting, woke the air,
Yet I was not least mourner there.
The struggling pangs within my breast
Were scarce, by sense of fear, represt.

The weeping slaves grew calm once more,
They strove the old man to restore.
Their basins quickly they supplied
With waters from the cooling tide;
On his unconscious face they pour
A chill, revivifying shower,
And chafe his cold limbs till they show
The signs of life's returning glow,
And shout into his heedless ear
Until, at length, he seems to hear.
Hard was their heavy task, nor soon
They roused him from that deathly swoon

AGIB

At length he rose. They dug a grave
Not distant from the sounding wave.
With many a sigh and many a tear,
The hapless youth they buried there.
The surf's low music will, for him,
Be an eternal requiem.
The gray haired father, whelmed with woe,
Did the first earth upon him throw.
It made my heart bleed but to trace
The hopeless anguish on his face.
If I had known that my own death
Had brought his poor child back to breath
I would have died, thus to restore
The mourning sire to peace once more.
The slaves filled up the grave with speed,
And leveled it, with pious heed,
Above the silent sleeper's head,
And left him in that dreamless bed;
And, on the boundless sea, departed,
Bearing their master, broken-hearted.
I saw the vessel's sails of white,
In distance, vanish from my sight,
And drew a long breath of relief,
Set free from fear, but not from grief.

My hope had been, that in this ship
I would have crossed the pathless deep,
To reach my country once again;
But fate compelled me to remain.

AGIB

I wandered, for a month or more,
That island's isles and mountains o'er.
The wild fruits of its forests dense
Gave me sufficient sustenance.

With restless mind, in roving round,
A channel in the sea I found,
Which seemed the island to divide
From land upon the other side,
That, from its vastness of extent,
I deemed must be the continent.
It was so far away its hue
Was strongly tinged with airy blue.
Yet Hope, long absent from my breast,
Returned once more, a welcome guest.
I built a kind of raft, or float,
And though that shore was far remote,
And my weak craft was sadly tossed,
I made my way and safely crossed.
It was a dangerous deed to do,
For strong and swift the current flew,
And would have swept me out to sea
Had I not struggled manfully,
With aching arms and bending oar,
To gain the unknown, distant shore.

New life and vigor warmed my blood,
I turned my back upon the flood,
And, inland, bent my sturdy way,
Long journeying, through the weary day

AGIB

Far off, I saw a wondrous glare,
Like some huge fire burning there.
With joy, I saw, in my advance,
These tokens of inhabitants.
I reached the spot, where I perceived
What I, as fire, first believed,
Was but the bright beams of the sun
Upon a copper castle thrown.

Daylight withdrew her latest smile
Just as I reached this stately pile.
Its occupants admitted me
With kindest hospitality.
They were polite and handsome men,
And each was young; their number ten.
One thing with wonder filled my mind,
That each was, in his right eye, blind.
A gorgeous room they gave to me,
Furnished with every luxury.
And, at their courteous request,
At supper I became their guest.
And, after this, I did narrate
The varied story of my fate.
The happy evening hours were spent
In jokes and songs and merriment.
Midnight at last draws near, and still
The frequent wine glass we refill.
At length one of my hosts arose:
“My friends,” said he, “our mirth must
close;

AGIB

The time is here, let each one mind
Those duties, by our vows, enjoined."

A sign was given; as quick as thought
Ten basins by the slaves were brought,
And one of these was placed before
Each of my friends (they passed me o'er);
And when the basin lids were laid
Aside, the contents were displayed—
A mixture of a novel kind,
Ashes and soot and dirt combined.

This filthy compound, each one smeared
Over his forehead, face, and beard.
Such vile disfigurement they bore,
That each from each I knew no more.
Meantime, their sounding breasts they beat
And wail, as if in sorrow great;
While from their swollen eyelids flow
The briny torrents of their woe;
And in the ear-fatiguing noise,
Each one exclaimed, with mournful voice,
"This is the fruit of our excess,
Debauchery, and idleness."

Long, with their tears and groans and sighs
They still kept up the exercise.
At length they cease; the slaves appear,
Supply the ten with water clear,

AGIB

Wherein they washed; their features,
stained,
Once more their native hue regained.
With downcast looks, they left my view,
And, silent, to their rooms withdrew.

I, also, to my chamber went,
But slept not, for astonishment,
And much I wondered what might mean
The strange performance I had seen.
Next morn, I asked the ten, with zeal,
Their cause of conduct to reveal;
I also sought the reason why
They each one bore a blinded eye.
A firm refusal they did give,
Decided, sharp, and positive,
To my request; they told me I
Indulged a curiosity
That, till my latest day was spent,
I should, unceasingly, repent.

Thus flatly silenced, I forebore
To broach the hateful subject more.
At their request, I whiled away,
With them, another pleasant day.
And evening came, and supper through,
Their dreadful penance they renew;
Their faces all are plastered o'er
And look as dismal as before;

AGIB

They beat their breasts, they weep, and cry,
And loud lament, with accents high,
"This is the fruit of our excess,
Debauchery, and idleness."

But curiosity, within my soul,
Had not obtained supreme control.
I fatally resolved to know
The cause of all this seeming woe.
Next morn, I asked my hosts again
Their mystic manners to explain:
"How is it, friends," said I, "your nights
Thus close with penitential sights?
It seems a marvel to my mind,
That all your number should be blind.
How is it you are all bereft
Of the right eye, and not the left?
Why should not some among your crew
Be blinded in the left eye, too?
Or, in the left alone, deprived of sight,
Enjoy clear vision with the right?
Your sad afflictions seem to me
To have such similarity
That, in my mind, I am impressed
Your tale would not lack interest."

One answered, spokesman for the rest:
"T is out of friendship for a guest
That we have thus withheld from thee
The meaning of this mystery.

AGIB

We still advise you to desist;
But if, in searching, you persist,
We are compelled by Fate to grant
The information that you want.
This knowledge will be dear in cost,
Your right eye will thereby be lost.
When thou art blind, hope not to gain
Admission to our wretched train,
For, as our number is complete,
No increase can be made to it.
Cease thy request, be warned again
While yet the warning is not vain!"

Then I held forth: "You have not here
A prince who can be swerved by fear.
Whatever Fortune puts me through,
No blame can be attached to you.
You all have nobly done by me;
On my own head my actions be.
Come life or death, come weal or woe,
This thing am I resolved to know."

Seeing advice was thrown away,
The ten proceed a sheep to slay;
Next, they stripped off its woolly skin,
And quickly sewed me up therein.
Ere I was in this prison pent,
A knife, to me, they did present,
And thus did their directions give:
"Prince! it is now our time to leave;

AGIB

We go, but soon, with searching eye,
The roc thy figure will descry,
And, thinking you a sheep, will bear
Your form supported through the air.
Be not alarmed, but, from his flight,
When thou perceivest him alight,
Swift, with thy knife, rip up the skin
And make quick exit from within.
Then, on strong winds, ascending high,
The roc will vanish in the sky.
Then wilt thou see a palace fair,
It is thy fate to enter there.
We all of us, by turn, have been
That wondrous mansion's walls within,
But of the adventures that befell
Each of us there, we may not tell,
Forbid its mysteries to explain.
Farewell! we soon may meet again."

They left me there alone, and soon
The mighty roc came swooping down;
The roc, a bird of dazzling white,
With bulk enormous to the sight,
Whose strength, tremendous, can sustain
An elephant from off the plain,
And lift it to the mountain's crest
To make her famished brood's repast.
Borne in his talon's grip, I fly
A traceless journey through the sky;

AGIB

At length, he downward bends his flight,
I felt him on the ground alight.
With quickness, I my knife applied,
And stood, once more, on Earth outside.
Again, his waving pinions bear
His snowy form through middle air.

Then did I cast my eyes around;
A palace, vast, adorned the ground,
Built with more splendor, I believe,
Than aught that fancy may conceive.
Straight to its gates I went, and there
Was met by forty ladies fair,
Gayly attired, one and all,
In rich and rare material.

They led me to a spacious hall.
Each door that lined its gorgeous wall
Was framed in carved and curious mould
And formed of solid, burnished gold,
Beset with gems; large diamonds clear,
With rubies interspersed, appear
Over the panels, till the sight
Grows weary with excess of light;
And everything within the place
Was framed for beauty and for grace.

Arrived herein, they gave to me,
Though I opposed with modesty,
A seat exalted o'er their own,
A seat as splendid as a throne,

AGIB

And thus, with charming words, they say
"Thy reign o'er us begins to-day.
We are but slaves, you are our lord,
And we obey your slightest word.
What e'er your regal mind may crave,
By merely asking, you shall have."

Naught could surpass the constant care
Of these young girls, of beauty rare,
In serving me; a feast divine
They serve, with fruit and sparkling wine
And, after this, my giddy brain
With amorous songs they entertain,
And ply their limbs in many a dance
With easy grace and elegance.

Next day was in like manner spent,
In music, dancing, merriment,
In banqueting, and drinking wine—
A Paradise of bliss was mine.
My fair companions all obeyed
Each wish of mine, as soon as made.
Their easy virtue could not well
Be deemed as any obstacle.
At least, I found, opposed to me,
It never gained the victory.
In such a life my days flew on
Until, at length, the year was gone.
I grew, confirmed in vice and wine,
An idle, drunken libertine.

AGIB

One day, when I had closed the year,
I saw my forty friends appear
In my apartments. With surprise,
I saw their red and swollen eyes,
And they, in measureless distress,
Embraced me with deep tenderness,
And, while their tears like raindrops fell
They bid to me a last farewell.

I did conjure them to explain
The cause of all this mental pain,
And why they were about to leave
Me there alone, to pine and grieve.
One of my friends replied to me,
That they were all obliged to be
Absent afar, until the sun
Should forty revolutions run,
On duties that they would not tell,
But which were indispensable,
And that their grief arose from fear
That I no more would meet them here.
"But this depends," continued she,
"Upon yourself entirely.
The hall adjacent you will find,
With doors, a full one hundred, lined.
We are compelled to leave the keys
Under your care, which open these.
And of these rooms are ninety-nine
Thou mayst explore, if thou incline,

AGIB

While we are gone, and thou shalt find
Things rare and wondrous to thy mind
Within their walls; but do beware
Of the dread hundredth portal there—
That is the fatal Golden door—
Ope that, and we shall meet no more.
It is the fear, lest you should be
O'ercome by curiosity,
To do this most unlucky thing,
That causes all our sorrowing."

I did embrace them all, much moved
To find myself so greatly loved.
I gave them my best thanks for this,
To me, most flattering distress.
With solemn vows, I did declare
That all the riches earth might bear
Would no inducement give to me
For losing their society,
By breaking their commands; I swore
I would avoid the Golden door,
And always pass its entrance by
In haste, and with averted eye.
From them, the hundred keys I took.
With many a backward, lingering look
They spoke again their last adieu,
And vanished from my longing view.
My tears gushed forth when they were gone
And I was left once more alone.

AGIB

My time, till now, had passed away
In such a round of pleasures gay
That I had felt no wish, before,
This wondrous mansion to explore.
I now had leisure—forty days—
Wherein to search the unknown place,
And full access to ninety-nine
Apartments, strange and dark, was mine,
With wonders filled, that none might guess
And I resolved, with earnestness,
That actual sight should gratify
My restless curiosity.

It would be tedious, long to tell,
If it were even possible,
Of all the various things my eye
In these apartments did descry.
All that in Nature is most fair,
Or elegant in Art, was there,
Supremely perfect; and the floor
With precious heaps was covered o'er.
The wealth in jewels, and in gold,
Could not by mortal tongue be told.
The wonders, room by room, increased,
And each, by turn, I thought the best.
The immense collection was so vast
That nine and thirty days had past,
During my exploration, through
The rooms I was allowed to view.

AGIB

The sight of this enormous treasure
Elated me beyond all measure.
I felt that it was all my own,
And when I thought how very soon
My gay companions would return,
And bid my spirit cease to mourn,
My heart, beneath its sense of bliss,
Was all dissolved in tenderness.

That time was near—one short day more—
One door remained—the fatal door—
Whose untouched lock withheld from me
Something I wished, yet feared, to see.
Since my companions went away
I ventured near it but by day.
And if, while lingering in the hall,
I saw the shades of twilight fall,
While nigh the accursed spot I stood,
A kind of shiver chilled my blood,
And I have left the place, so fast
That I did smile at my own haste.
It was not cowardice, for I
Had tested well my bravery.
But there was something in the power
Of darkness and the lonely hour,
And the sad place, that did suggest
Drear fancies to disturb my breast.
I even exercised a care
That night should not o'ertake me there.

AGIB

But curiosity, with iron sway,
Governed my mind that woeful day.
My conscience whispered, 't was a sin
To break my vows for all within
The gloomy place, and still
I did not have the strength of will,
By weak desires hurried on,
To let the accursed lock alone.
Like him who feels, in evil hour,
The serpent's fascinating power,
And gazes on its glittering eye,
Deprived of strength to fight or fly,
Till, roused from his enchanted mood,
He feels its poison in his blood.

So gazed I on the door forbid,
And wondered what behind lay hid.
Determination came to me,
And boldly I applied the key,
But shivered, with a sudden shock,
To hear the starting of the lock.
The door flew open, and a smell,
Too strong, although agreeable,
Rushed from the place. The fragrant scent
Made me unnerved, grow sick and faint.
I rallied soon, but gave no heed
To this dread warning, but, instead,
Resolved to be deterred no more,
I promptly entered through the door.

AGIB

The scent remained still strong, but I
No more felt ill effects thereby.
Among the many curious things
That filled my mind with wonderings,
Was a fine horse, with golden curb,
Caparisoned in style superb.
His stately head he carried high,
And fire glittered in his eye.
Lithe were his limbs; he had a form
Endowed with every equine charm.

I led him forth so that the light
Might better bring his points to sight.
I mounted on his back, and would
Have urged him forward, but he stood
In stubborn balkiness, when I,
In anger, did the lash apply.
No sooner did he feel the stroke,
Than forth, in hideous sounds, he broke
A neigh between a bray and yell,
Ne'er heard I aught so horrible.
And swift, extending from his side
Wings, till that moment unspied,
He spurned the ground, and, mounting high,
Bore me in terror to the sky.
My self-possession still remained,
And firmly I my seat retained.

AGIB

At length, the flying steed, again
Descending, seeks the level plain.
We lighted on a terrace, where
A lofty castle loomed in air.
Then did he, furious, plunge and rear.
I tried dismounting, in my fear,
But was not quick enough; the horse
Hurled me to earth with stunning force,
And having, with his tail, struck out
My right eye, on his pinions stout,
High, in the boundless fields of air,
He flew, and left me wailing there
On that lone terrace, for the woe
My thoughtless acts had brought me to.

The castle, where I thus came down,
I soon discovered was the one
From which the roc had carried me.
And soon I was rejoiced to see
The kindly ten. My fate I told,
And all its wonders did unfold.
But neither, by their lips or eyes,
Gave they a token of surprise.
The tale was old, for every one
Had through the same adventure run,
And all the bliss I could reveal
It had been theirs, by turn, to feel;
And all the evils I had past
They, too, had borne, from first to last.

AGIB

They mourned my sorrow, and, for me,
Wept tears of genuine sympathy,
Lamenting that their train, complete,
Could no addition bear to it.
They bid me turn my weary feet
To seek the court of Bagdad great,
Where one, unknown, would meet with me
Who would decide my destiny.
So I resolved : this garb of woe
Over my shoulders I did throw,
And started on the road, before,
A weary journey, long and sore,
Sad as a pilgrimage, or flight,
And, with this evening's setting light,
I saw the mosque spires shoot in air,
Reflecting back the dying glare.
Such is my tale, and to my thought
You all have listened, as you ought.
And I have seen the silent tear
Stain some fair cheeks around me here.
It renders my deep sorrow less
When beauty mourns at my distress.

But, with to-morrow's earliest ray,
To the Divan I wend my way,
Where I will cast myself before
Illustrious Haroun, and implore
The aid he knows not to deny
To strangers in adversity.

Cincinnati, August, 1867

Dialogue

Lawyer—

WHY do n't you hold your head erect and true
In the world, as I can do?

Farmer—

Brother! see yon field of grain
That stretches o'er the smiling plain,
The well-filled heads are bent with weight,
But empty ones are standing straight.

Fairmount, February, 1868

The Past

You remember, dear Jennie, how darkly the night
Fell over the blue hill at even,
When the stars twinkled forth in their pale silver
light,
And the moon was a crescent in heaven.

That hillside is fair as it ever was then,
The sunset is gilding the sky,
But the nights that we passed there will never
return,
And I think of the past with a sigh.

1856

Richard

RICHARD is an awful lad,
He has been, from childhood, bad.
He lies drunk all night, full oft,
In some ditch or stable loft.
Drunken brawls are his delight,
Though he seldom wins the fight.
Oft his mouth and eyes and nose
Bear the print of sturdy blows.
Richard smokes, and Richard chews,
He his mother does abuse.

Richard's temper's not the best,
Wrath is ready in his breast.
Cross him once, and you will see
What a snarling cur is he.
If his collar fits not fair
He will it to tatters tear.
When he can't get on his shoes,
Damnation's self seems broken loose;
He will curse and swear, until
It will make your blood run chill.

Richard is light fingered, too,
Skillful thieving he can do;
He can steal your pocketbook
Right beneath your very look.
Richard is not fond of work,
Duty he will always shirk.

RICHARD

Truth, he will but seldom tell
When a lie will serve as well.
He is always seen to go
With the vicious and the low.

Richard, like a rake profound,
Ruins all the girls around;
Black or white, or rich or poor,
None from Richard are secure.
Spavined hag, and filthy jade,
Can not make him feel afraid,
Though with foul infection fraught.
Death and hell he sets at naught.
In all ways he does contrive
To be the meanest man alive.

Richard takes the Devil's eye,
Nick will get him by and by.
When he has him safe in hell,
He will roast him long and well.
He will tie him to a stake,
Richard then will quail and quake
When he sees the imps prepare
Brimstone heaps, to roast him there.
He will tell the Devil, then,
How, if he could try again,
He would keep his morals clear,
Day by day, and year by year.
He will beg one trial more,
(Hell has heard that tune before).

To MARY G—

Nick, with grin benign, will say:
“Richard, you have had your day,
No one made you enter here,
The road to heaven was just as clear.
You plucked Pleasure’s flowers gay,
Now the thorns come into play.
You the left hand road have tried,
Now you must results abide.
You are settled in your state,
Your repentance comes too late.”
“Rouse him, devils! warm him through,
Let him see what you can do.
We will teach the lad, ere long,
What is right, and what is wrong.
For such fellows, Hell must spare
The best upon his bill of fare.
Fan the fire, and heap the coal!”
Lord have mercy on his soul!

Fairmount, January, 1868

To Mary G—

O MARY, you are pretty!
You are almost divine!
Why can you not have pity
And say you will be mine?

Cincinnati, 1853

Lines

NANCY is a fickle maid—
She changes every day;
One hour, all her heart is here,
The next, 't is far away.
I'd sooner trust the April skies,
Which either frown or shine,
When seas of blue across them fly
And stormy tempests rage on high,
Than think that she were mine.

1859

Acrostic to a Whisky Glass

WHO loves not his daily dram,
He is hardly worth a damn.
I, with him, can ne'er agree;
Sober chaps, I hate to see;
Keen they feel Misfortune's blow,
Yet a gill would ease their woe.

Give to me a social throng;
Let us drink the whole night long,
And care, disgusted, will depart;
Sell the whole world for a song;
Still we'll all be gay in heart.

February, 1868

Parson Gay

I AM a handsome peasant girl,
Not over wise, they say,
And as I walked in yonder glen,
I met with parson Gay.
O, parson Gay! he has a school,
A sort of female college.
I ween the lassies who go there
Get some queer kinds of knowledge.

The sly, ensnaring parson,
His soul is full of art;
He wears the garb of Virtue,
But Vice is in his heart.

He sat me down upon a bank,
He said he long had loved me.
And he was such a handsome man,
That much his speeches moved me.
He said that he would marry me,
Ere autumn's blast would whistle.
He wronged me of my virtue, next,
Beside yon hedge of thistle.

The sly, ensnaring parson,
His soul is full of art;
He wears the garb of Virtue,
But Vice is in his heart.

ACROSTIC—CINCINNATI

I've a notion to expose him here,
To all the population.
But ah! he is a man who owns
A spotless reputation.
And, if I told this tale on him,
No person would believe me;
They'd swear the parson could not be
The man who did deceive me.

The sly, ensnaring parson,
His soul is full of art.
He wears the garb of Virtue,
But Vice is in his heart.

Fairmount, February, 1868

Acrostic—Cincinnati

CITY, noblest in the thriving West,
In thee, may Virtue fix her lasting rest.
Ne'er, from thy streets, may busy Trade depart.
Courage and Culture, Science, Wealth, and Art,
In thy broad confines may they ever dwell.
Ne'er may dark Vice, and Misery, fell,
Nurture their brood of Crimes in thee.
Afar thy gates, let Sloth and Ignorance flee,
Till all thy rival cities 'round shall own,
In Civilization's race, the prize is thine alone.

February, 1868

Where Jennie Used to Dwell

THE gate is from its hinges rent,
The wall is overthrown,
My voice but makes the place appear
More desolate and lone.
The autumn weeds are rank and high,
And screen the broken well,
The long grass whistles in the wind
Where Jennie used to dwell.

And there the yellow sunflower waves
Aloft its golden flowers,
And the prickly gympsum's snowy bell
Unfolds in autumn hours.
On every stone the moss is green,
The bat here builds her cell.
Beneath the thistle coils the snake
Where Jennie used to dwell.

And she is gone, whose smile once made
The sunlight of my heart,
And fate, with cruel hand, hath torn
Our destinies apart.
And still, my memory seeks the place
That saw our last farewell,
My heart inhabits still the spot
Where Jennie used to dwell.

THE MOON AND THE PILGRIM

They tell of Eastern palaces,
Supremely rich and grand,
Whose gardens bloom, like Paradise,
 Around, on every hand.
More dear to me, yon roofless cot,
 The wall and weed choked well;
There love has built his sacred shrine,
 Where Jennie used to dwell.

Fairmount, January, 1868

The Moon and the Pilgrim

Pilgrim:

PALE wanderer thro' a desert sky,
Where hast thou a home on high?

Moon:

Where the heaven's blue walls descend,
There my wanderings do not end,
Homeless, and without a friend.

Pilgrim:

Thou, like me, art cold and lone,
Home and friendship from me gone;
Thro' the world I wander on,
None to love, or hold me dear,
Few to hate, and few to fear—
Joyless, in a barren sphere.

1859

First of May

SPRING has clad the blooming lea,
Sunshine gilds the level sea;
Loosed from Winter's chains, the stream
Tempts us to its banks to dream.

Young leaves, on the branches spring,
Birds, through all the woodlands, sing;
From a thousand feathered throats
Gladness pours her sweetest notes;

But those strains, within my mind
No responsive echoes find.

Jennie seeks a distant shore,
Far beyond Old Ocean's roar.

I will never cease to mourn
Till she shall again return.

Jennie, when you safely stand
In the far-off stranger's land,
Will the image haunt thy mind
Of one whom thou hast left behind?

Time, that can the granite wear,
Soon will dim thy love, I fear.
Thou wilt never more be mine,
Still, I am forever thine.

Thou art lost to me, as though
Cruel Death had laid thee low,
And the chill, damp sods were spread
Darkly round thy narrow bed.
Where shall I another find
Half as simple, fair, and kind?

A REPLY

What care I for fresh'ning spring?
Let the feathered songsters sing,
They will fail, with vocal art,
To banish sorrow from my heart.
Pensive here, I wander on,
Loneliest among the lone.
I am like yon blasted tree—
Lifeless, looming o'er the lea;
Bare, its withered boughs are seen,
While all else is gay and green.

Cincinnati, May, 1866

A Reply

A DOCTOR told a lady fair,
That if the women ever were
Allowed in Paradise to dwell,
Their tongues would make the place a hell.

“And if,” said she, with face aglow,
“Some smart physicians that I know
Shall practice in that country fair,
Their art would make a desert there.”

January, 1868

The Trap for Venus

OPENING LINES

WHEN Venus first from Ocean sprung,
She rose among the Houri throng,
Who led her to the Cyth'ron isle,
Where endless Summer wears her smile.
From thence to heaven, where ardent Jove
Beheld her with the eyes of love.
The maid was in youth's earliest prime,
And lovelier than her own green clime.
Sweet Cythera, what marvel then
That gods, of finer sense than men,
Enamored of angelic grace,
Should give it a celestial place!

Not in the heart of Jove alone
The light of passion shone,
But all the powers of the sky
Looked on their god with jealousy.
They uttered not their deep distress,
For silence dwells with hopelessness,
But there was one, whose manly breast
Held deeper love than all the rest,
And she loved him, tho' not a word
From the other's lips had either heard.

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

Scene 1

RECITAVO

'T was in the heavenly fields above,
The kingdoms of almighty Jove,
Just as the early light of day
First on the earth began to play,
Stern Vulcan by his forge fire stood,
And loud his heaving bellows blowed.
The unwrought piece was all ablaze,
He viewed it with attentive gaze.
In that rough piece, his artist eye
Bright forms of beauty could descry;
Perhaps, a graceful sword or tempered spear
Or armor that a god might wear.
But a low footstep strikes his ear,
He turns and sees his monarch there.

(Jove enters.)

Jupiter—

Out! thou miserable abortion! hence!
Thou miscreated piece, contrived
Of devlish machinery, for a thing of soul
I can not call thee, for thou dost
All of thy deeds as an automaton.

Vulcan—

What is thy cause of anger? I
Have nothing done to merit it.

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

Jupiter—

Now, fellow, thou art much too quick
At feigning in'cence, yet 't is true
No act of thine is worthy blame
Since first you came among us here
In heaven.

Vulcan—

Wherefore, then,
Do you thus rail?

Jove—

It is because
Thy crooked, square backed form
Hath grown to be a by-word and a jeer
Throughout all heaven.

Vulcan—

And yet,
My monarch, thou dost know
That had the forming of myself
Been by myself, I would have been
Fairer than any of those starry worlds
That trace the deep blue ether sea
Under the floor of heaven.

Jove—

I know
Thy cunning skill.

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

Vulcan—

Thou dost indeed. It would be strange
For any eye of god or man to see unmoved
Yon seats that line the crystal walls
(Each God hath one, and they are made
To glide self-driven from their stations,
Biding their owners' word). (And then,
You've seen divine Achilles' shield.
Where is the work of art will stand
And not be dazzled into darkness
By its resplendent beauty!)

Jove—

Prate no more
Of thy consummate skill. We all well know
Thou hast the gift of ideality, but this
Is not for what I came, at least not all.
I bring another message, (though the sight
Of thy lame ugliness oft makes me curse,
Till I forget all else.)

Vulcan—

Speak it out then!

Jove—

I'll tell thee, we, the immortal gods,
Last night, in council, sat around
Those tables thou hast made, and we
Were planning the affairs of men below,

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

Dooming proud kingdoms unto death,
And giving over blooming realms
That they might be Destruction's prey,
Ordaining how, in the lone desert wild,
Fair cities from the flinty plains should
spring,
And mingle with the azure sky
Of tropic climes, their sun-clad towers;
Or casting lot, which would be best
For earth's affairs, if Troy or Greece
Should in the present struggle fall,
When, suddenly, young Mars arose,
Who is, as you are well aware,
The god who, chief, presides
O'er hostile arms and bloody fields.
He said, his eye beheld afar
A golden age, when men should cease
From troubling with each other, when
The warrior's tempered sword should be
Transformed into the iron share,
Then earth shall yield the fairest fruits,
That Summer, when she tempts the earth
By smiles and tears, can draw
From out their dwelling in the darkened
mold.

Then shall the pageantry of war
Cease to allure the toiling shepherd swain
From his own craggy mountain side,
Changing his hard lot for a worse,
To fall beneath the skillful blow

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

Of one, who murders him for hire,
In the arena of the amphitheatre,
Far from his friend. (No pitying tear
Fall on his mangled form; a shallow grave
Is all that saves him from the beak
Of the dark-plumed vulture of the cliff.)

Vulcan—

Most happy change! What more?

Jove—

No more the mother's aged eyes
Shall weep at parting with her boy.
The crimson fields of strife shall grow
To their first greenness 'neath the trees,
Whose leaves were shattered by the stroke
Of swift projectiles; youths and maids
Shall whisper love to one another,
While not an eye is near to view,
Save, on the Sky, the blinking stars
And the round moon.

Vulcan—

O Fate, be blessed!
That brings to mortals so much peace!

Jove—

Not peace alone, but burning love
And generous friendship; man with man

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

Shall deeply sympathize; the thing
That wakes emotions in the breast of one
Shall wake the self-same feelings in
The hearts of all his fellows; as
When in the deep, immeasurable sea,
The smallest pebble alone is cast,
The circling waves alike are stirred
From continent to continent,
And even to the frozen pole,
Their hearts shall be all one,
Close knit, even as your skillful hand
Makes two white-heated iron bars
Unite in perfect union.

Vulcan--

When

Did our fierce war god say
That golden age should be?

Jove--

'T is near,

But first the Grecian arms must win
In many a well-fought field; the walls
Of Troy must first be leveled low,
And strangers rule in Priam's halls.

Vulcan--

The walls of Troy will bear, unhurt,
The fiery brands and darts of Greece.

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

Jove—

Mars feared these things; he said,
The Greeks, with their untempered blades
And ill-erected enginery, will never
Bear up against the warrior hosts
That mighty Priam's mandate sends,
All masked, from out the brazen gates
Of still unconquered Troy.

Vulcan—

And how
Can, then, that golden age arrive?

Jove—

But Greece will conquer yet, tho' now
Her fallen fortunes seem to be
Presage of inglorious rout, and death,
And terrible defeat, yet we,
Our war god says, that we
Must strengthen, that she may have
The power to conquer Troy; and thou,
He said, with thy deep craft and skill,
Wouldst make a cunning teacher,
If thou wouldst leave the upper realms,
Bending your course to earth, a while
To dwell with mortals.

Vulcan—

When
Was it e'er heard a God went down
And sunk his dignity so low,

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

As being teacher of a common trade
Unto a lower race?

Jove—

But I command.

Vulcan—

And to obey thee, is my joy,
But this I will not do, although
Thou art my king.

Jove—

Hence with thee!
Hie thee down to terrors there,
And teach the mortals of that sullen isle,
To frame their bows of azure steel,
Tempered to springiness; and let them know
A way to tip their feathery arrows
With deadly points. Give them the art
To forge the softened iron, and the steel,
In such proportion, that the blades,
Which, from the mixture, are drawn out
Beneath artistic blows, may bend
From point to hilt, in one round circle,
Incapable of breaking; such as shall
In days long hence, give such a fame
To a rich Asian city, called Damascus!

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

Vulcan—

Thus would I love to do. But never, yet,
I'll leave these blessed fields of heaven
For that dull spot of earth.

Jove—

Your back
Is lifted up against me.

Vulcan—

I will not
Obey your mandate in this thing.

Jove—

Thou hunch-back beast, how darest thou
Thus stand before me, face to face,
And, in thy coarse, contemptuous style,
Thus baffle me! You "will not!"
I beg your pardon, we shall see, anon,
Whether you will or wont. But first,
To edify you, let me say: Last night
I passed eternal banishment
Upon you.

Vulcan—

And for what was that done?

Jove—

Why, did I curse thee, when I first
Caught sight of thee this morning?

THE TRAP FOR VENUS

RECITAVO

Vulcan Cast Out of Heaven

Rapidly was Vulcan sent
Downward through the firmament.
His course was full as swift and far
As a summer shooting star.
He saw the realms of mighty Jove
Metling into space above.
It was morning, when he first
From the upper regions burst,
And the evening shadows, brown,
Were already coming down
When the green earth came in sight,
Gilt by Sol's receding light.
He gave one shrill shriek of pain
As he struck the grassy plain.
Then, all stunned, he breathless lay
Till the twilight died away,
And pale Luna's tender eyes
Smiled upon him from the skies.

1858

Song of the Lemnian Shepherds

(FROM THE TRAP FOR VENUS)

WE are shepherd laddies free,
Whose lives are passed in gaiety.
Our hearts are free from every care,
Sorrow hath no corner there.
A crown is but a gilded thing,
And riches have a secret wing,
Wherewith, in evil hour, they fly
And let their vain dependent die.
The shining dross is hardly gained,
And, with still greater toil, retained.
The free and joyous shepherd mind
Is not by ties of gold confined.
Within his cabin, dwelling lone,
He covets not a monarch's throne,
And, Nature's nobleman, looks down,
Full oft, on him that wears a crown.
When slowly sinks the Western sun,
And the harvest day is done—
When each heavy-loaded wain
Drives from off the leveled plain,
With our wives and sweethearts fair,
Sitting on yon hillock, there,
Heedless of the evening gale,
We gayly quaff the dark brown ale—
Hoping each other peace and rife
And immunity from strife,

A SUCCESSFUL INVOCATION

Blest content and perfect health,
And every other joy but wealth.
Our maidens, they are kind and true,
And pure as yonder ether blue.
They do not love for wealth or fame,
For beauty or a titled name—
But strongest love lies in their breast
For him alone who loves them best.
Thus, our peaceful days are spent
In a heartfelt, calm content,
And we are shepherd laddies free,
Whose lives are past in gayety.

A Successful Invocation

UNFRIENDLY ice, beneath my weight
You find your strength is not too great.
Ye Gods! if prayers can safely win,
I pray you let me not break in.
O! now I go, outrageous luck
Ordains that I should have a duck.
Aforesaid Gods! extend your arm
And help me, lest I meet with harm.
All thanks! I need your aid no more
My feet, at last, have reached the shore.

1857

Lines

RING the bells and shout alarms!
Children, soldiers, to your arms!
Oppression's brow begins to lower,
Arm in haste, and rise in power!
And show your love of liberty!

Look, behold! What meets the sight?
Whence doth come yon lurid light?
With fire and sword, on every side,
Our land is wasted far and wide,
And must we suffer tamely?

No! to your arms! fear ye not shame?
Drive back invaders whence they came,
And show, to every land on earth,
What your own native land is worth
For patriotic chivalry!

And soon Columbia's isle shall smile
In Freedom's ray of glory, while
No other clime can boast a name
Higher on the rolls of Fame,
For love of home and liberty!

November, 1853

Istlapalapan

THE SPANISH CAMP

STERN Volcan lifts her airy head,
With its eternal glaciers spread—
The winds howl round each shattered peak
A wintry cadence, cold and bleak,
And clouds, condensed in upper air,
Unfold their misty curtains there,
And gathering gloom begins to creep
From the dark valleys up the steep.
The long, warm southern day is done—
And dimly sets the Summer sun.

Far down upon the level plain,
The forest held a lawless train
Of every grade, and every kind—
Some were luxurious and refined,
While others—formed of coarser stuff—
Both were, in mind and manners, rough.
The camp fire casts its yellow ray
Through the shadows, dull and grey,
Dispelling half the gloom of night.
Flashed on, by the changing light,
Many a soldier lay in rest,
With his mantle on his breast,
And his weapons by his side—
The sword, whose temper has been tried,
And the broad and massive shield,
Which—full often—has repelled

ISTLAPALAPAN

The edges of an angry foe,
Or skillful spearman's well-aimed blow.

A SOLDIER'S SONG

My home was on the Guadalquivir,
Spain's lovely and romantic river—
Its current ran before our door,
Not three rods from its verdant shore.
Fresh teardrops dim my aged eye
When all the joys of infancy
Rush back upon my inner view
As lovely as in Fancy's golden hue—
So lovely, that they seem to me,
Of present ills, a mockery.
I see the friends I knew and loved—
With whom the forest depths I roved.
But all of these are dead and gone,
I know not now a single one;
I am the last, and here, alone,
Far distant from my native land,
I wander with a motley band,
Whose only wish and only sigh
Is gold and immortality.
The future prospect, too, is drear,
Murmurs of discontent I hear.
Dissensions in the camp arise
As to who owns the shining prize—
And Hope, and Love, and Friendship fly,
While Hatred reigns, and Mutiny.

To ALICE H——

And fast, our comrades sink below
The missiles of an outraged foe.
From Famine and from Hardship, some
Have sought the silence of the tomb—
And, one by one, they drop away,
Like Summer leaflets, green and gay,
When grey November, chill and drear,
Brings down the Autumn of the year.
And I shall share their luckless fate
And rest from trouble, soon or late.
Fair, Fair Guadalquiver, now adieu!
No more I scan thy waters blue,
And vine-robed hills of sunny Spain,
Which I shall never tread again.

1858

To Alice H——

COMING thro' the shades last night,
Was n't the high moon clear and bright?
The scene was so surpassing fair,
I could have lingered later there,
 Till the silver stars would set.
But had some curious eyes have seen us,
We might have felt like Mars and Venus
 When trapped in jealous Vulcan's net.

Acrostic—Millcreek Bottoms

Muddy and filthy, overflowing brook,
I know no stream less picturesque in look.
Lord! if our City Council would but make
Levees along thy shores, for Beauty's sake!

Clad in sough weeds, the bottom lands appear,
Rising Ohio floods them every year.
Enterprise and labor might these wastes reclaim,
Enormous buildings may loom proudly here.
Keen prophecy foresees, and does the truth proclaim.

Benevolence commands the work be done,
On all sides suffering may be seen,
Thousands would gladly toil, from sun to sun,
To save their little ones from famine keen.
Once well begun, the work need not delay,
Much of its cost, the unearthened stone will pay.
So may a general good, at small expense, be won.

February, 1868

Lines

WHEN our land with blood was drenched,
And brave men sunk and died,
What kept our freedom's flame unquenched?
What saved our nation's pride,
When every mountain streamlet's flood
Was stained with dying valor's blood?

When famine's pall hung dark before,
And Britains' thunder hailed our rear,
When shades of Death were hovering o'er,
Hope's faintest gleam could not appear.
When firmest hearts were veiled in gloom,
What saved our Freedom from the tomb?

'T was God Himself, who stretched His hand
To guide through dangers, darkness dim,
Till we should 'mongst free nations stand,
A beacon of light to them.
And Freedom, by command divine,
Here builds her everlasting shrine.

November, 18th.

Sunset

How brightly sinks the orb of day,
Behind the western hills away,
 Before the frown of even;
And, one by one, the stars of night
Hang up their pale and trembling light
 Upon the front of heaven.

The full orbed moon that shows no wane
Resumes her dark, nocturnal reign,
 And leads the starry host;
Tree, and flood, and ruin nigh,
Beneath her beams of silver, lie,
 In their uncertain lustre, lost.

At such a moment, in our ears
Rings out the music of the spheres,
 Which they, symphonious sung,
O'erjoyed at young Creation's birth,
Or shouted to the rising earth
 As it from Darkness sprung.

All seeing wanderers of the skies,
Shining through long, long centuries,
 You've seen full many a sight;
And thou, O silver countenanced moon!
Tell me the scenes that thou hast known
 In thy unmeasured flight!

SUNSET

We've seen, o'er this terrestrial ball,
Kingdoms arise, and kingdoms fall,
 And vanish from the earth.
Time's iron hand hath overthrown
Ten thousand kings of ages gone—
 Oblivion hides their birth.

History may tell of Rome and Greece,
Their deeds in war, their arts in peace.
 Their story is a fragment small,
Of the sad tale of man's career,
Since his creation, on the sphere,
 As emperor of all.

Tribes have arisen and overcome
Ignorance and error's misty gloom,
 And left Barbarity behind,
Shedding, on each surrounding nation,
The beacon light of Civil'zation,
 And triumphing in mind.

Next, from the pinnacle of Fame they're gone,
Slowly degrading into darkness down,
 Their fortune's sunlight overcast;
Savages, fugitives, and slaves,
Or lawless pirates on the waves,
 Extinction at the last.

SUNSET

Such is the tale the past has told,
The future will the same unfold;
The principle of change is mixed
In all earth's elements, and we,
As we draw near the grave, will see
That there is nothing fixed.

Tremendous mountains rear
Their bold and craggy steeps in air,
And vomit fire and smoke;
Anon, their hidden flames are dead,
And they, as grassy plains, are spread,
With their foundations broke.

Fair islands spring from Ocean's breast,
Whose shores afford the petrel rest,
And nurse the gannet's brood;
Then, slow subsiding, sink again,
Leaving no mark, upon the main,
To guide to where they stood.

The sphinx in far Egyptian lands,
The pyramids in desert sands,
As relics still remain.
But generations perished there,
Toiling, like slaves, to raise in air
Those wonders of the plain.

SUNSET

In Western climes, the Copper race
Look, with a sad and wistful face,
 Toward the setting sun.
History has turned their final page,
Their drama, on life's changing stage,
 To the last act, is done.

Soon, from the earth, the latest trace
Shall vanish, of that fated race;
 The broad Pacific's surge
Seems, in its melancholy sweep,
In numbers ominous and deep,
 To chant a nation's dirge.

Clad in the springly garb of green,
In many a spot the mounds are seen,
 Of earlier races here;
Time hath, from out the hand of Fame,
The trumpet snatched, that could proclaim
 Aught of their dark career.

Tradition's busy lips are still;
Their shame or glory—good or ill—
 Alike, are in the tomb;
Their joy and hope and fear are hid,
With all they saw and all they did,
 In earth's unconscious womb.

SUNSET

The Mastodon of other days
No longer treads the forest maze,
 Lord of the green domains.
Save, now and then, some scattered bone
That speaks of strength to us unknown,
 No mark of him remains.

A mortal dies, 't is but alone
A drop from out the river gone.
 A taper hath died out in air,
A bubble's burst upon the sea,
 A vapory cloud hath chanced to flee
 From sight, in ether fair.

He perishes, and Nature's mien
Is calm, as though he ne'er had been.
 She smiles upon his grave,
No trace of Sorrow may be found
In heaven above, or on the ground,
 Or in the winding wave.

The birds will sing their glad, free song,
And Childhood's voice will be as strong
 As in the days gone by;
If he hath loved, she whom he loved
Will weep not long, but grow unmoved,
 And hear a stranger sigh.

To a Burning Taper

BRIGHT taper, how thy glistening beams
Irradiate the place.

In thee, resemblance great there seems
To man's ephemeral race.

Before the world, his acts may blaze
In brilliancy divine;
But death awaits his transient race,
As darkness waits on thine.

But, taper, now thy fading ray
Proclaims thy end is nigh.
When I shall reach my latest day.
Thus peaceful, let me die.

But now, that all thy wax is burned
Thy blazing beam is o'er,
Thy light to darkness now is turned
To shine on earth no more.

But man, when Death's enshrouding gloom
Shall 'round his body lie,
May lead a life, beyond the tomb,
Of glorious immortality.

Fairmount, January, 1868

The Will O' Wisp

BEHOLD, upon the marshy plain,
A spark of shining light!
Which, breaking through the dark'ning shade
Gleams far upon the night.

Lone, and in melancholy caves,
See that bright spectre rise!
Too timid for a mortal's touch,
The flaming meteor flies.

Thine is an unobtrusive gleam,
Content to shine unknown.
Bright wanderer of the swampy moor,
Pursue thy way alone!

Some evil spirit attends thy path;
Thine is a sad, ill-omened glare.
If e'er I cross, by night, yon swampy land,
May I not meet thee there!

The pilgrim, in the night astray,
Follows thy beam in his distress;
The treacherous glimmer leads him far away
Into the tangled wilderness.

Perchance, he may suppose thy glow
A lantern in some peasant's hand;
Weary and panting, he pursues
But journeys devious through the miry land

THE WILL O' WISP

The slimy quicksands draw him down,
 He cries for aid; no friend is there—
The heedless vapor wanders on,
 Or flies aloof, or melts in empty air.

Or should the luckless wanderer think
 Thy flame some cottage window light,
And hope for safety, food and drink,
 And refuge from the inclement night,

Vain is his hope; that treacherous star
 His weary footsteps will beguile,
Through solitude and darkness far,
 To trace full many an erring mile.

* * * *

The light goes out; he tries in vain
 To backward trace his unknown way.
The wolf's wild howl comes o'er the plain
 And it is far from day.

O! ne'er in that sad solitude
 Shall morn arise again on him;
For thirsty tongues will lap his blood,
 And cruel fangs tear limb from limb.

Thou art, like every human hope,
 Illusive, evanescent, bright,
That lures us on until we grope
 In disappointment's night.

To AN Ass

For all our visions fade away,
Anticipation is our only bliss;
The things we love, if we could gain,
Would be but nothingness.

1855

To an Ass

YON lop eared brute, that sturdy ass
Who crops the meadow's tender grass,
Appears from sorrow freer far
Than most of human beings are.
The woes by which our hearts are prest
Are strangers to his tranquil breast.
Nor does he anxious feel, at all,
Whether his fellows rise or fall.
Illusive hopes shine not on him,
Nor drear foreboding fancies, grim,
Display the future to his sight,
In coloring as dark as night.
Hatred and jealousy and fear, unknown,
In peace, his happy life glides on,
 Unbroken, in tranquillity.
 With no desire more than grass,
 I own he wakes my envious thoughts,
 Although he is an ass.

Oxford, October 20, 1861

The Witch of Vesuvius

“SAGA, what should bring your feet
Thro’ the crowded city’s street?
Thou hast left thy mountain cell;
Sure, it bodes some miracle.
Hast thou wearied of the sky
And the tall cliffs looming high,
That thou comest, to wander thus,
Far from steep Vesuvius?”

It was the priest of Vulcan spoke
To her, the Saga of the rock;
She, whose keen prophetic eye
Darkly saw thro’ destiny,
Whose aspect, terrible and grim,
Awaked emotions deep and dim
Within the rude observer’s breast,
A fear that would not be represt.
Her form was bent, but not with age,
Her eye flashed wild, but not with rage,
But something which was hard to guess,
Which was, yet was not, restlessness,
A quick and changing cat-like glance,
Now turned direct, and now askance,
Yet not one glance was made in vain,
Or wrote false entries on the brain.

Her hair was grey, its backward flow
Showed temple sunk, and wrinkled brow;

THE WITCH OF VESUVIUS

Her shapeless lips fell sadly in,
And spaces marked, where teeth had been
Her trembling frame with palsy shook,
And shrill her childish accents broke.
The Saga's face upon him turned,
On his, her restless, full eyes burned:
"Priest of Vulcan! think not I
Am weary of the clear, blue sky,
But I have left my mountain home;
My feet shall tread the path to Rome.
The web of Fate is nearly wove,
That governs earth and heaven and Jove,
And I have fled that fatal doom,
There, planned for Herculaneum,
And for her sister Pompeii,
Now smiling 'neath Italia's sky.
My fire is out, my hearth, alone,
Is cold as the surrounding stone,
And I am gone, I know not where,
My life is safe in Rome, not there.
And were I thee, I too would fly;
Thou may'st escape thy destiny.
I wish thee not Destruction's prey,
My only friend, this many a day."

The priest looked down and faintly smiled
"Sister, thy foolish fears are wild,
They have no base, thy fright is here,
There is no cause of danger near;"

THE WITCH OF VESUVIUS

And, as he spoke, his finger prest,
With awe, against the Saga's breast.
She sighed, and sadly shook her head:
"I would that all my fears were bred
Within my breast, but well I know
The dim, dark things that work below
The giant mountains' frame of rock.
Demons accursed, of flame and smoke,
Are slowly working out that doom
That prophecy foretells must come;
And now that curse is near fulfilled,
Vials of wrath will soon be spilled.
Thou never yet hast heard from me
An ill-predicted destiny.
There is a something in the mind—
A vague, dark sense all undefined,—
That warns us of approaching ill,
And makes the heart feel faint and chill.
My hapless lot, my dwelling rude,
Its grandeur wild, and solitude
Have fostered well that fatal sense,
And gave it fresh developments;
And Nature's converse, and the sky
Taught me to love sublimity;
And solitude, and deep distress,
Made me, at last, a prophetess.
Some say, by magic, I divine,
From evil stars that nightly shine,
And that the flight of birds, to me,
Foretell of things that are to be.

THE WITCH OF VESUVIUS

Who ever turned his wandering gaze
Toward a still star's silver rays
And saw its holy lustre shine
From out its azure crystal shrine,
And thought its light, so pure and still,
Could e'er reveal approaching ill?
And the poor birds, those minstrels fair,
That wake, with songs, the woodland air,
The loveliest race, whose hours are spent
Between the earth and firmament.
They wanton happy lives away,
Lives that are one long summer day,
That add a charm to gloomy woods,
And break the spell of silent floods.
In mountain fastness, wild and rude,
The granite throne of Solitude,
Their graceful forms, and songs, make less
The solitary's loneliness.
Would that I was as free from care,
And could a sinless spirit bear;
They ne'er anticipate to-morrow,
To-day is theirs, for joy or sorrow.
Of them no use I ever made,
Their ignorance were little aid,
But darkly, in this heart's deep cells,
The spirit of prescience dwells.
That is the book that I consult,
I need no magic arts occult,
Foretelling hours of joy or gloom,
When here is my oraculum."

THE WITCH OF VESUVIUS

“Sister,” the priest of Vulcan said,
“Grief seems thy mind to overshade;
Thou hast been sorrow’s child, I fear,
And fain, thy story would I hear.
Tell me the tale, thy fears to me
Seem without grounds and vapory.
My fellow creature’s grief, from me,
Draw out the tears of sympathy.
If, Saga, I can be thy friend,
And bid thy foolish terrors end,
To smooth thy lot, or render less
An outcast’s lone unhappiness,
So ‘t were my highest joy to do.
Present thy grievance to my view!”

There was a crevice in the rock,
And from it steamed the sulphur smoke,
A thin, white cloud, that hovered there
Until dissolved in azure air.
I looked into the fissure’s gloom,
But all was silent as the tomb,
And cool and dark; a low faint hiss,
I heard far down in the abyss,
And sounds like winds on surging water;
To me they seemed demoniac laughter.

I looked again and, in the night,
The fissure, with phosphoric light,
Was faintly lit; the hovering cloud,
With a blue, ghastly radiance, glowed.

THE WITCH OF VESUVIUS

I saw the slumbering fires there
Would soon burst forth to light and air.
At times, I felt a sudden shock,
And then would come a puff of smoke,
A flash of flame, and then, again,
Coldness and darkness held their reign.

I heard a low and wailing moan
That shook beneath, my feet, the stone.
It seemed so human, that, to me
It made me start, I know not why—
Those sounds, the fires, the sudden jar
Spoke of an elemental war,
To which the wars of men were peace;
Where nature's furious agencies—
Fire and flames and winds—would be
Competitors for victory.

I sought my couch, and when the day
Dissolved the mists of darkness grey,
I left my hut—my feet were bent
To labor up the steep ascent:
Cliff after cliff, in toil, I past,
And reached the crater's edge at last.
But what a vision met my view—
A sea of flame, whose sanguine hue
Was fiery red, like clotted blood,
And, from the surface of the flood,
Vapors of poison filled the air,
Till all who breathed might perish there

THE WITCH OF VESUVIUS

But I was on the lee'ward side,
The smothering fumes, across the tide
Were borne by winds away from me,
And I gazed with impunity.
Miles in extent, on either side,
Spread out that horrid, burning tide,
Whose springs of fire were deeply drawn
From the red Gulf of Plegethon,
And demons from the gloom of hell
Stir that infernal crucible.
Huge billows, inward from the tide,
Dashed wild against the flinty side,
Bathing the red hot rocks with fire
Beneath their fierce, dissolving ire,
And heat intense; the crater edge
Yielded before them ledge by ledge.
O'er the wild scene, there was a glare
That turned to noon the midnight air.
Along the verge, the lava spray,
Cooled by the winds, congealed would lay,
In slender filaments like hair,
A mineral vegetation there.

When all these wonders met my eye
I gave a sigh for Pompeii;
I looked upon the fearful fire,
Yet, while I looked, could not admire.
Its beauty, grand and terrible,
Found one unconscious of its spell.
Charmless and sad, it seemed to me,
Grief cares not for sublimity.

A JOKE

'T was sunset, and the yellow sky
Burned with its golden brilliancy.
I heard the evening eagle shriek,
Far up upon a distant peak,
When first I saw the dreadful view—
But midnight's dark, cerulean hue
Shrouded the leaping, fiery flood.
While still I gazed, and morning came,
Its clear light paled the glimmering flame,
And lit the upward path I trod,
To guide me to my lone abode.

Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, May, 1863

A Joke

SOME men of letters, fresh from town,
While ruralizing up and down,
With interest, viewed a youthful ass
Play merry gambols through the grass;
At which the poet of the crowd
Was greatly touched, so that he vowed
He'd like the frisky thing, to send
As present to a distant friend.

“‘T is my advice,’ responded one,
“The ass should be forthwith sent on,
But if I were the poet, I
Would, round its neck, a motto tie,
Which should run thus, ‘When this you see,
Kind friend, you will remember me.’”

Fairmount, January, 1868

Reply

TO A SPEECH URGING ENLISTMENT

You ask me, why I do not go
And fight my country's battle,
And gently hint, I am afraid
To hear the cannons rattle.

I'll tell the truth; and shame Old Nick,
At least for once I'll try, Sir!
If you want men who wish for death,
Not on the list am I, Sir!

I hate to hear the sounding drum,
I loathe the science martial.
Burnt powder makes a kind of smell
To which I am not partial.

I love not much the marches long,
When sleety blasts blow chilly,
In muddy roads, benumbed and cold,
In sections, rough and hilly.

I like still less the soldier's tent,
The vermin breeding hovel,
While I can sit in ease at home
And read the latest novel.

REPLY

The people of the sunny South
Have never done me wrong, Sir!
To injure them, why should I take
A trip so very long, Sir!

My muse says, she despises crime,
At least, I think I've heard her,
And war is seldom less or more
Than simply Legal Murder.

War proves alone a fact well known,
As books on physics speak, Sir!
That when two forces are opposed
The strong o'ercomes the weak, Sir!

A vile appeal to brutish force
Can but affect the creature;
It leaves Man's reason quite untouched,
Nor moves his higher nature.

The Golden Rule of right and wrong,
Keystone of God's creation,
Applies not more to single man
Than to a mighty nation.

In this enlightened nineteenth age,
Mankind has reached a season,
In which all questions should be fixed
By conscience and by reason.

REPLY

You speak of wounded hero's fame,
And of the laurel crown, Sir!
The scars of war last longer far
Than all of its renown, Sir!

“None but the brave deserve the fair,”
That was old Dryden's saying;
If so, the brave oft miss their dues,
In their addresses paying.

The crippled brave at discount are,
Though oft in lyrics chanted,
The unscathed cowards are the ones
By whom they are supplanted.

While such opinions sway my mind,
(Their truth none may resist, Sir!)
I think I will not likely be
In much haste to enlist, Sir!

Cincinnati, 1864

The Fairy Italian

I WAITED on Hymen,
And thus did I say:
"My heart, a fair damsel
Has stolen away.
Her beauty awakens
A pang in my breast,
My nights are all fevered,
And broken my rest.

Her eyes are like midnight,
But mild is her air
As the skies of her birthplace
In Italy fair.
And her long, wavy tresses,
One source of my woe,
All darkly o'ershadow
Her forehead of snow.
O! tell me, I pray thee,
If thou canst divine,
If the fairy Italian
Shall ever be mine!"

And Hymen thus answered:
"Thy sorrow is great,
But Mortality's children
Are subjects of Fate.

THE FAIRY ITALIAN

The three dreadful sisters
Have woven thy line,
And the fairy Italian
Shall never be thine.
I know that her heart
Is bestowed upon thee,
But he who will wed her
Dwells over the sea.”

“Thou hast loved her, and lost her;
(That story is old,
But the heart gives it freshness
As often as told.)
The red rose of passion
We pluck in Life’s morn,
But its leaves will all wither
And leave us the thorn.”

“And when time is sprinkling
His frosts on thy head,
Thou wilt grieve over hopes
That are buried and dead.
In summer and winter,
In sunshine and shade,
In valley or mountain,
In forest or glade,
In all times, and all places,
Thy thoughts will return
To the days of thy youth,
And compel thee to mourn.”

TO FANNIE H—

“And when the red embers
 Burn warmly and bright,
A picture of beauty
 Will live in their light.
And thou wilt live over,
 In fancy alone,
With the fairy Italian,
 The days that are gone.”

Fairmount, February, 1868

To Fannie H—

My heart an empire long has been,
And ruled by many a different queen.
Fair Alice was the first to reign,
But Kate soon made her power in vain,
And took the government her own.
But Maggie stole from her the throne;
She ruled it for a good long while.
But lovely Eva, by a smile,
For she in coquetry was skilled,
Usurped the place that Maggie filled.
Now Eva, too, with all her grace,
Is forced to abdicate the place.
All of her power now is thine,
The loveliest queen of all the line.

Cincinnati, May, 1860

Lines

THOSE we love most soonest leave us;
 Bliss hath but a feeble stay.
Hopes are born, but to deceive us,
 Like the clouds, they haste away.

Thou wert my first love, Dear Mary,
 But the clay is on thy breast,
And the wailing winds are dreary,
 Where thy form is laid to rest.

Thou hast vanished like a vision;
 Thou hast come and gone from sight,
Like a dream of blest Elysian
 On a witching summer night.

But I never can forget thee,
 Whom I would have died to save.
God may grant that I may greet thee
 In a land beyond the grave,

Where the starting tear of Sorrow
 From the eye may never flow,
Where no yesterday, or morrow,
 Our eternity will know.

Where the friends whom Death has parted
 Shall unite in love divine,
I will weep not, broken-hearted,
 Thou wilt then again be mine.

TO JENNIE B—

From thy blissful home in heaven,
Be my Guardian Angel here,
Let thy holy influence, given,
Lead me upward to thy sphere!

January, 1868

To Jennie B—

'T IS spring upon the hilltop now,
And spring upon the plain;
Pale Winter now hath yielded
His sceptre and his reign.
Yes, the Spring is everywhere,
All the earth seems free from care,
Every songster of the grove
Is singing of his feathered love,
And music fills the woodland air.

But, within my joyless heart,
Winter still is reigning there.
If the sunlight should depart,
'T were Winter thro' the total year.
And Jennie's smile, which was my sun,
Beams not upon me, she is gone.
So, while sweet Spring is breathing round,
And life emerges from the ground,
My Winter is not done.

Cincinnati, April, 1858

To a Dog

O! THEME sublime,
For prose or rhyme,
I feel my soul inspire;
I feel the muse,
Her warmth infuse,
The letters glow like fire.

O! noble beast,
Of friends not least;
O may I never lose you.
My fistic skill
Will work them ill,
Who venture to abuse you.

Your eyes are strong,
Your sight is long;
A mile off you can spy me.
Your flying feet,
Then travel fleet
Until you gambol nigh me.

In midnight dark,
Your honest bark
Scares villains worse than thunder.
They know that you
Will put them through
If they attempt to plunder.

To A Dog

Well pleased, I spy,
In thy soft eye,
A touch of honest candor.
But man's deceit
Is so complete
That it excites my dander.

Your form is fair,
Jet black your hair,
Your drooping ears hang pretty;
Wise is your look;
If words you spoke,
Your sayings would be witty.

If you could write,
You might indite
Some poems hard to beat, Sir!
My muse forebodes
That, in your odes,
You'd sing the praise of meat, Sir!

O Carlo, dear!
Long on this sphere,
May health and ease content you!
But when you die,
With many a sigh,
Your owner will lament you.

TO A LEAF

And in that time
I'll pen a rhyme,
While thou, in dust, art sleeping,
Thy deeds, in verse,
I will rehearse
Till none can read for weeping.

Fairmount, January, 1868

To a Leaf

LEAFLET, thou art yellow now,
Cold the winds of Autumn blow
Round thy fragile stem.

Colder still the winds will be,
Stronger blasts will rustle thee,
From skies more dark and dim.

Soon, from off thy native bough,
Lifeless thou shalt sail below
To the wintry ground.

Where once the summer, soft and green,
Gently beautified the scene,
And Zephyr breathed a mournful
sound,

Icy winds, with rapid sweeps,
Pile the snow, in drifting heaps,
All desolate around.

Cincinnati, November, 1861

Sewing Girl's Lament

You ask me, Mother, Why my cheek
Has lost its color now,
And Sadness, like a cloud, has cast
Its shadow on my brow?

You ask me, Why my fingers worn
Their needle fail to ply,
And why I turn away to hide
The tear-drop in my eye?

Three months have fled since Davie left,
The lad I loved so well,
I felt as if my heart would break
To hear his last farewell.

And now he's on the weary deep,
Where wintry billows roar,
A sad foreboding thrills my breast
That we will meet no more.

O Mother! you on Davie looked
With an unkindly eye,
And, for your sake, I hid my love
And choked the rising sigh.

I told him that I loved him not,
My words my soul belied;
The flame that burned between us both
Was strongest on my side.

SEWING GIRL'S LAMENT

And now, when o'er our humble roof
I hear the tempest rave,
I think how Death may overtake
My Davie on the wave.

'T is not the deep alone I fear,
Nor rocking billow's sway,
But in far distant regions dwell
Maids beautiful as day.

And he will take another bride,
Forgotten I will be,
And one who loves him less than I
Will steal his heart from me.

The songs that Davie used to love
I can no longer sing;
I shun the places where we met
In twilight hours of spring.

For all these things but call to mind
Remembrances of him,
That make me shed my bitter tears
Until my eyes grow dim.

And if, within the forest shades,
A rustling leaf I hear,
My heart pants, as it used to pant
When Davie's step was near.

SEWING GIRL'S LAMENT

A lordly lover wooes me now,
His riches dazzle thee,
But he will never fill the void
That Davie left with me.

Amid my heavy golden hair,
His jeweled fingers stray;
He little thinks the love he seeks
Is wandering far away.

Yes, petrel like, my love has now
Upon the sea its home,
And dwells where Davie's bark is lashed
By broad Atlantic's foam.

'T is this that pales my rosy cheek
And wastes my early bloom;
If he returns, 't will only be
To gaze upon my tomb.

O Mother! you have wrought for me
A cruel web of woe,
When Davie asked me to be his,
To bid me answer, No!

Immure me in the convent walls,
The Black Veil I will take,
And dwell in silent solitude
Until my heart shall break.

_LINES

No second Davie e'er will come
To make my spirit glad,
And from my lips will never sound
The bird-like laugh I had.

O Mother! I was once a child
From care and sorrow free,
But henceforth all the world will seem
A weary waste to me.

Fairmount, January, 1868

Lines

THE harp that told the tale of Troy
Waked not the strains I love,
Of Hector's might, Achilles' wrath,
And all-surveying Jove.

But give to me the simple strains
That flow from out the heart sincere,
The tender loves of boyhood days,
The hearts that thrill with hope and fear.

The rapid rill, the water fall,
The gliding river's rippling moan,
The forms of those we loved the best,
Who now are dead and gone.

September, 1857

To Minnie L—

ON SEEING HER PORTRAIT

MINNIE, that face is none but thine,
Those jetty rings of clustering hair,
The rosy cheeks, and lips divine,
The forehead, pure and fair.

The Grecian nose, the ruby mouth
Arching like Cupid's bow,
The arched black eyebrows of the South
The sad, dark eyes below.

Those eyes, whose every glancing spark,
Their heavy, silken fringe
Almost restrained, and gave their dark
A melancholy tinge.

The little hands, the rounded arms,
Are copied well by art.
Here, harmless, I behold the charms
That stole away my heart.

All is not thee, there's not that grace
That animation gives;
One fixed expression lights this face,
It changes not, nor lives.

While thine, is like some crystal lake
Whose tranquil waters lie,
And frown in gloom, or smile in light,
And mirror back the sky.

Oracle of Ditmarschen

THE land of Ditmarschen
No more is free,
A blight comes over
The linden tree.

It pines and withers
In slow decay,
Its leaves of beauty
Have dropped away.

The people are humbled,
Their spirit broke,
They bear in silence
A stranger's yoke.

But the time is nearing,
A day will come,
When the blighted linden
Will bud and bloom.

A magpie shall build,
In its boughs, a nest,
And cherish her young
'Neath her warming breast.

A brood of seven,
With plumage white
As the snows that cover
The mountain's hight.

THE ROBIN

Ere their pinions are trained
For earliest flight,
The tree will flourish
In beauty bright,

And the land recover,
So prophecy says,
The glorious freedom
Of former days.

Fairmount, January, 1868

The Robin

FRAGMENT

O ROBIN! in your leafy nest,
No gloomy thoughts invade your breast.
If you were imprisoned in a cage,
At once would cease your little rage.*
Your strains are but the wild and free
Triumphant strains of liberty.

1858

ge," *i. e.*, enthusiasm, rapture.

Fragment

(CREOLE GIRL)

LUCKLESS pris'ner at the bar,
Soon will cease thy passion's war,
And among the silent dead
Thou at last be numbered.
Ere thy spirit pass from here
To a distant, unseen sphere.
Tell us the tale of former times;
Tell us thy early life and crimes.
While the latest twilight ray
Of thy life's departing day
Lingers round thy broken heart,
Tell us thy tale, and who thou art!

Abbot, thy hair is thin and grey;
Thou, too, hast nearly seen thy day;
Thy feet have reached the latest stage
Of life's long, desert pilgrimage.
Oh God! the life that thou hast spent,
From what mine was, how different.
Within the convent's lonely walls,
Far distant from temptation's calls,
Thy task was but to curb and bind
The wild desires of heart and mind.
Hard is that task, thorny and drear,
And costing many a bitter tear;
But thou hast won, and gained that peace
In which the war of passions cease.

FRAGMENT

The gloom of thy approaching grave,
And cold oblivion's ruthless wave,
Bring scarce a terror unto thee,
Tho' life is more to you than me.

Father! I whisper in thy ear
The story of my dread career.
The act I did was desperate—
I curse, alone, my bitter fate,
But not myself. I only served
My victim as she well deserved.
She was the blight of my young life,
'T was she who woke this mental strife,
And fed that fiery passion's flame
That caused my early death and shame.
My deed was just, at least, with me,
I have my own heart's sympathy,
That heart that knows its inward grief,
Yet suffers, hopeless of relief,
Which would have poured its crimson tide,
To win the love of her who died.

Oxford, 1862

The Summer Wind

I

THOU summer idlers! would that I had wings
Like thee to trace the clear, blue sky. Alone,
Far upward, I would bend my flight,
Breathing the purest ether, where
My spirit might exalt in its own sense
Of boundless liberty, and worship more
The unseen spirit of the vast
And dark arcana of the universe.

WIND

Would this be happiness to thee?

I

Sublimest bliss, to contemplate
The mighty chart of Nature spread below,
To mark its mystic changes, and its most
Miraculous economy, and how, thro' all,
One government prevails, free from the flow
Of mortal constitutions, gentler far,
Yet more restless, pure as purity,
Tongueless and voiceless, speaking out
The mute and touching eloquence of action.

WIND

Thou seemest to have loved Philosophy;
Hath she returned thy adoration well—
Storing thy mind with truth?

THE SUMMER WIND

I

Philosophy,

—Would she might teach me truth and sense!—
In early childhood, was my darling theme.
E'en from my cradle I have followed her,
As mariners—when the roaring main,
Limitless, surrounds—pursue the polar star,
And still will follow, till the shade
Of Dissolution shall involve my eyes,
Hiding the light of Truth and Life.
O! if Almighty Providence shall grant to me
A deathless name, an immortality
To burst the fetters of the grave,
And mock at cold oblivion's sway,
May I be written down by men, as one
Who followed Nature, from an innate love
Of Harmony and Beauty, and whose mind,
By smooth gradation, learned, at last,
By loving Nature, to adore her God.

August, 1856

A Rural Stranger's Story

I WANDERED forth one snowy night,
And met a frail nymph, fair and bright.
"Come on, young man," she said to me,
"We'll spend this dull night pleasantly."
But I replied, with simple mien,
"Tho' I am young, I am not green,
Fair girl, I will not go with thee,
Tho' I would like your company."
"But, what would be the ill," she said,
"The gale is chilly overhead,
My room is lofty, warm, and bright,
Where we may pass the wintry night."
I went with her, but will not say
How I amused myself till day.
We hugged each other, and caressed,
And I thought I was truly blest.
I left my angel girl at dawn,
But soon found out my watch was gone.
On further search, I quickly knew,
Ten guineas had departed too.
O fairy maid! for so much "tin"
You could afford to "take me in,"
But, if you sell your love so high,
I must confess I can not buy.
I rued awhile that costly folly,
And sunk down into melancholy.
The whetstone wears away the blade,
But, by that means, an edge is made,

_LINES

And what, in money, left me then,
In sharpness was made up again.
Stranger, when next your keen eyes see
A "fast girl" come it over me,
Just tip the wink, and let me know,
I am no more a "sucker" now.

Based upon Police Report, Cincinnati Daily Times, January 10, 1859

Lines

To JENNIE B——

FANCY! thou, whose magic art
Oft beguiles the lonely heart,
Bringing back each hope and fear
Of many a half forgotten year,
With thy skillful pencil, show
Jennie's angel face, and brow.
'T is done, I see, I more than see,
The lifelike image, it is she.
Pale, her little face appears,
And her eyes are wet with tears.
Jennie, if for me you weep,
Let your sorrow go to sleep.
The fates, regardless of your tears,
Clift Love's thread with fatal shears,
And now, far distant, you and I
Follow our different destiny.

Oxford, September, 1861

To George W—

DEAR GEORGE, why waste your life in care
For that obtuse, unyielding fair?
Another person holds her heart,
In vain you ply the winning art.
Escape her toils, escape in haste,
She is not worth the time you waste.
The Hyatt girls are both as fair,
Have full as darkly waving hair,
And eyes as beautiful in hue,
Maud has black, and Alice blue.
Enough! 't is vain, describing o'er
The charms you knew by heart before.

'T is strange, that you should need advice,
I always thought you over nice;
But Venus has a wondrous art,
And eyes are subject to the heart.
That jade is odious to the view
Of every man of taste, but you.
Indeed, 't would wound me to the soul
To touch her with a ten-foot pole.
The net, in which she captured thee
Is quite invisible to me.

May 4, 1857

To Jennie R.—

I

THOU art quick and inconstant, my love,
As the breast of the changeable sea,
Whose billows in light and darkness move.
Why should I be faithful to thee?

JENNIE

I am like to the breast of the changeable sea,
Thou to the immutable sun;
No matter how moved its waters may be,
Still faithful, he ever shines on.

I

The sun is too faithful, clouds often divide
Him from his fair mistress, the sea.
When another supplants me, my pride
Forbids that I reconciled be.

JENNIE

But remember, tho' often the clouds intervene,
The love looks, she gives them, are dim.
But when they are gone, O! how sweet and serene
Are the smiles she bestows upon him.

I

Thou art quick and inconstant, my love,
As the breast of the changeable sea,
Whose billows in light and darkness move,
But I'll ever be faithful to thee.

Cincinnati, 1857

Verses

SWEET is the sunshine, and the shade
Of dark green forests, and the rippling sigh
Of brooklets running thro' the grassy glade,
The twilight hour, and the mighty sky
Studded with stars, and Cynthia high.

Sweet is the patter of the April rain;
Its monotone shuts up our sleepless eyes;
The sound of thunder, and the tossing main,
The war of elements, when, thro' the skies,
Hissing and hot, the vivid lightning flies.

Sweet are the thoughtless, happy days of youth,
When Hope alone, to Fancy's eye,
Paints her illusive pictures with the hues of truth,
And shows our future, like a cloudless sky
Over a waveless ocean, whose attractive glow
Dispels all thought of lurking rocks below.

Sweet is a brimming cup of wine,
When the faint heart is sunk in care,
Our spirits rouse, and images divine
Drive from our minds the sorrows there.
The friendly stimulus, with gentle heat,
Gives the dull, flagging heart a steadier beat.

VERSES

Sweet is a city life to him,
Whom drunkenness and change delight;
Brothels, and whores, and alleys dim,
Afford him many a welcome sight.

Hateful to him, the day has grown;
The fitful starlight and the moon
Are his lone confidants; from the sky
They witness his debauchery.

Sweet is a row upon the breast
Of limpid waters, at the close of day,
When tranquil Nature seems almost at rest,
And the last ripple dies away
Behind the oars, as we pass, and, low,
The white foam murmurs round the prow.

Sweet is the maiden, whom our love
Transforms from human to divine,
Faults turn to virtues; every move
Is gracefulness, each common line
Of her young features seems so fair,
That Phidias' self might find a model there.

April, 1857

Fragment

How LOVELY is the solitude
To him, whose spirit shrinks away
From mortal sympathy, and mourns
In silent contemplation of its woe.
Whose life is nipped and withered in the bud,
Whose heart is broken, and whose eye,
Pale Melancholy, with her darkening glass
Hath dimmed to every ray of hope.
Behind, a squandered life remains;
Around, a darkened, dreary world.
How sunless! when the last faint ray
Of Hope's fair twilight has gone out,
And Melancholy broods, like night,
Over a broken heart.
Before, the rainbow never decks the sky.
The boundary of his pilgrimage
In darkness ends.

How like a tree our spirits are—
Green, blooming in its native grove.
Rain, wind, and sunshine, fail to harm
Its tender sprays; with latent life
It drinks the pure, sweet ether of the sky.
Its rootlets pierce, with strengthening power,
Deeply, its grassy bed.
And soon it stands the monarch of the wood,
And mocks the whirlwind that casts down
Man's mightiest palaces in dust.

ACROSTIC—OHIO RIVER

The fair, green tree,
Transplanted, feels the heavy weight
Of foreign earth above
Its tender rootlets torn.
A foreign sky o'erhead,
Strives its green leaves to thrill
With wonted stamina and life.
Down to the earth its branches stoop,
Its foster mother's breast
Becomes its early grave.
Its leaves are withered, and its bloom decayed,
Its beauty and its life are gone.

Oxford, October, 1861.

Acrostic—Ohio River

O DEAREST, sweetest stream of all the earth!
Hard by thy margin stands the city of my birth.
If Fate, to other lands, e'er banish me,
Oft shall my memory wander back to thee.

Rambling along thy level, sandy shore,
I, and the early friends I knew,
Vain pleasures followed, but no more,
Ever, shall meet that faithful crew—
Reckless and happy as in days of yore.

Fairmount, 1868

Ask and Receive

THERE was a man whose locks were grey,
He loved a damsel, fair and gay.
And feeling that they'd had enough
Of moonlight and romantic stuff,
He sought out the obdurate fair,
And made an offer, plain and square.

“My dear,” said he, “perhaps you’ve read
The words which Jesus Christ has said,
And which are these, as I believe,
If you shall ask, you will receive,
If I should ask your hand of thee,
You’d hardly let him tell a lie.”

“Indeed I would,” she answered back,
“You can not reach me by that track;
You ask me for my hand, in vain,
‘T is what you never will obtain.”

The old man’s eyes, with anger flashed,
His teeth together sharply gnashed:
“Tut hity! tity! tell me why
You thus so coldly pass me by,
What have I done? for, from the start
I’ve done my best to win your heart.”

“I can’t complain,” the flirt rejoined,
“You always have been very kind,
But why you do n’t receive, is this,
It is because you ask a-miss.”

The Belle of the Evening

You reigned the empress of the hour,
A heart of flint might scorn your power;
But none there are of mortal mold,
Could view you with emotions cold.

Your eyes, while whirling thro' the dance,
Sent cupids forth at every glance.

You showed yourself suprem'ly, then,
A victress when among the men.

O! had we a Leucadian steep,
From which despairing beaux might leap,
What a gymnasium it would be
For thee alone, and only thee.

Were all who struggle in your toils
To stretch their necks and end their ills,
They'd number such a monstrous troop,
'T would surely raise the price of rope.

O! peerless one, they truly tell,
You'll pass thro' life, the reigning belle,
Gifted with beauty, wit, and sense,
Smiles, painted cheeks, and confidence.

And if kind Fortune should, on you,
This brightest gift of all bestow,
Which many a former belle has lacked,
Exemption from becoming cracked,

The man who gains your little hand
Will be the happiest in the land.

No hard complaints his lips should pass,
His belle will be the purest brass. 1860

The Garden Gate

THE garden gate, the garden gate,
 Around its posts no flowers cling,
Where you and I were wont to wait,
And whisper, till the hours were late,
 When Zypher brought the deepening Spring

The smiles in which your face was wreathed,
 Again I almost seem to see.
The bashful words of love we breathed
 Are freshly kept in memory.

My mental vision still retains
 A trace of every object there;
And oft renews forgotten pains
 And ill-resisted care.

The murmuring brook is bubbling near,
 Pale Cynthia sails the sky,
Your lovely face inclines to hear
The words I can not speak, for fear,
 Lest, cruelly, you might deny.

Sweet Alice, by the garden gate
 No more we'll whisper loving words;
No more the branches, bent with weight,
 Shall shelter Summer's warbling birds.

RAINY WEATHER

But where art thou? hath Fate severe
Impelled thee to a distant shore,
Or art thou close beside me here,
Or journeyed to that region drear,
Whose colonists return no more?

Oxford, 1861

Rainy Weather

WELL, I declare! it is too bad,
'T would almost make an angel mad.
Last night, a rainbow spanned the sky,
The bow of promise hung on high,
Giving us hope of weather dry.
We wake to find the sign in vain,
At morn, descends the hateful rain,
I hear it clattering in the spout,
There'll be, to-day, no stirring out.

Since Wednesday last, a week or more,
It has been one incessant pour.
The gutters rush all night, the sky
Is filled with electricity,
And frequent is the forked flash,
The sudden glare, the heavy crash.
Our hopes are futile, and our sighs,
For sunny days and starry skies,
While clouds above and mud below
Fill up the measure of our woe.

Cincinnati, April 10, 1860

The Mice in Council

At midnight's lone and solemn hour,
The mice convened in all their power.
They came, alas! to sigh and mourn
For friends, whom hostile cats had torn.
In council, they assembled so,
To plan some safety from their foe.
A young, but learned mouse arose,
And thus held forth in pithy prose:
"Brethren, I am your sober friend,
I come to help you gain your end.
The cat's step is so light and soft,
She takes us by surprise full oft.
But if we had some means to know
The presence of the odious foe,
We would be placed in danger never,
From any cat or beast whatever.
I have a plan, I'm sure will be
A most effective remedy.
Suppose the cat should wear a bell,
That when she moves the sound will tell,
By which each cautious mouse can hear
When his great enemy is near,
And will have ample time to flee
Into his hole's security."

Shouts of applause, vocif'rous, swell,
Long live the planner of the bell!

THE CLOSE OF WINTER

On which, a mouse quite grey with age,
Arose before the council sage.
Said he, "My brother plans quite well,
But tell me how we'll hang the bell;
And, furthermore, I wish to ask,
Who'll undertake the risky task?"

Cincinnati, I.

The Close of Winter

THE wintry winds are sunk, the clouds,
At the approach of vernal spring, have left
The face of heaven a field of blue.
Not yet the sunshine, with congenial warmth,
Hath waked the vitalizing breast of earth,
Our own great mother, to bloom forth,
Renewed in beauty, from her lengthened sleep
Up, the clear air, the curling smoke
Sails in blue volumes, and the setting sun
Casts a red glare that tells of coming spring.
O scene of beauty! quietude profound!
Would that my spirit might partake
Thy blest tranquillity! But bright, above,
The evening star twinkles in the west,
A burning, solitary lamp in heaven.
Hail! beauteous stranger, thou hast come
After long absence, like a ray of hope,
To one, whose spirit is crushed down
By a long, wasting night of sorrow.

Mutability of Nature

ROSE, with soft and sweet perfume,
No flower with thee may vie;
How lovely is thy summer bloom,
Yet thou shalt droop and die.

Tall oak, with branches stern and strong,
Greeting the cloud that wanders by,
Thy firm, green trunk may flourish long,
But Fate commands, and thou shalt die.

Huge ruined tower of solid rock,
From which the boding owlets call,
Time, deadlier than the earthquake's shock
Shall bid your scattered fragments fall.

Pale, silver planets, who, on high,
Traverse from pole to pole,
Your glory shall desert the sky,
Your fiery orbs shall cease to roll.

And thou, the Almighty's masterpiece,
A mingled deity and worm,
Fate marks thee out a narrow lease,
Thy spirit will soon quit thy form.

This mighty earth, this rolling sphere,
With all on it, must soon decay;
The sun and stars will disappear,
And darkness gulf the living day.

NIGHT-FRAGMENT

There is a spark of heavenly fire
Which can not, will not die,
The soul, eternal as its sire,
Shall flourish in the sky.

Cincinnati, 1858

Night-Fragment

WHEN gathering night comes dimly down,
And wraps, in gloom, the forests brown,
Far in the west, the fading day,
In sombre twilight, melts away.
Broad shadows spread the glimmering glade,
And dark ravines are hid in shade.
In the deep thickets' leafy gloom,
Insects resume their evening hum.
Yon ploughman leaves the furrowed plain,
And seeks his cottage hearth again.
Thro' tranquil air, and skies serene,
The distant city's domes are seen.
From many a lofty chimney there,
The blue smoke mounts the evening air.
That far-off hill, whose rocky brow
O'erlooks the valley far below,
Seems almost, to the gazer's eye,
As frescoed on the twilight sky.
Dread silence reigns, the constant roar
Of the broad city is no more,
And the last broken ray of light
Hath yielded to approaching night.

To Alice

THE fleeting sun
The day has done,
 And evening comes at last.
Forth from the west,
Awaked from rest,
 Flies out the frequent blast.

I must away,
Thro' shadows grey.
 Sweet Alice is my dear,
Her eyes are bright
As stars of night,
 When Summer's skies are clear.

Her hair is brown,
And wanders down
 A neck like marble, fair.
Her blushes hue,
I lik'en to
 Some rose's crimson glare.

The wicked thing,
With silken string,
 Has caught my foolish heart.
Why won't the fair,
Her mind declare,
 And bid my fears depart?

A DREAM OF LETHE

And, by one word,
The bonny bird
 Could make me live or die.
If she say yes,
'T is heavenly bliss,
 But death, if she deny.

Cincinnati, February, 1858

A Dream of Lethe

DEAR Kate, last night I dreamed I stood
By Lethe's darkly gliding flood;
And stooping, from the flowery brink,
I drank that chill, infernal drink
Which blights the drinker's memory,
Alike to joy or misery.
If his past life is full of woe,
A pilgrimage of grief below.
But if ill actions have a smart,
And conscience goads him to the heart,
That water is a blest relief
For all his care and all his grief.
From memory thy form departed,
And I, so lately broken-hearted,
Experienced, with a heavenly truth,
The sweet sensations of a second youth.

1861

Lines

SWEET Jennie, with thy little face,
How well my memory holds thy trace;
The dark brown hair, the changeful eye,
As azure as the Summer sky,
The rounded arms, the waxen neck,
The ruddy lips, and rosy cheek,
And long eyelashes, dark as death.
I sadly sigh and gasp for breath,
When, from the mist of other years,
Thy form, revivified, appears,
And Memory brings the past again,
With all its mingled joy and pain.

Perchance, the dreary, backward view
May bring a galling pang to you,
When things that happened you and me
Come crowding on your memory.
Of those fair, unforgotten days
When weak, seemed every word of praise
My feeble lips could use to tell,
Of charms and merits loved so well.

'T was not the charm that beauty gave,
'T was not the dark hair's heavy wave,
Nor perfect features, to enhance
Expression's light in every glance.
Tho' these were there, thy spirit bore
A charm to me attractive more,

LINKS

A kind of modest gentleness
That reassured my bashfulness;
'T was this that urged my passion on,
But Fate be cursed, for, still unwon,
I see the treasure, that to me
Seemed lovelier than divinity.

Perhaps some other may admire
Thy gentle self with purer fire,
Some worthier spirit yet may move
Thy spirit with congenial love.
I pray that this may be your lot,
Yet mourn to think I am forgot.
Tho' I myself am shut from heaven,
I ask to see none other driven
Out from its blest abodes, to be
A partner in my misery.
O no! I rather wish for you,
And thy successful lover, too,
A bliss that I can never view.
Nor may a mournful memory
E'er wring a bitter tear from thee,
In pity for his lonely lot,
Who mourns to find himself forgot.

June, 1860

Mind and Countenance

SOME love a lip of ruby hue,
And face of purest white,
With eyes of dark and dreamy hue,
Or like the diamond's light,
A brow like that aerial bow
That spans the April skies,
When weeping clouds prepare to go,
And rain o'er thorn and flower lies.
They love a cheek of blushing red,
Like that sweet scented flower
That lifts its Summer-tinted head
Over its native bower.

But give to me a noble mind:
That will my heart best please
Of anything of earthly kind,
Nor will compare with these.
And Darkness, every waving tress,
With hyacinthine hues, may bless;
The sea shell's pink and pearl may form
The pure complexion's colors warm.
Yet, these will fail to move,
If, underneath them, lies no charm
We can not love;
And eyes of amber's loveliest brown,
Or heavenly sapphire's darkest blue,
Wake love within the breasts of none,
If they express no feeling true.

Goddard's Ascension

Now, her viewless pinions bear
Aloof the phantom ship of air.
Slowly, from the plain, she glides,
Surging on the airy tides.
Leaning o'er the wicker car,
Stands the fearless voyager,
And a Godspeed! burst from all,
At the slow, ascending ball.

Higher yet I see it rise,
Now, upon the dark blue skies
Is its rounded outline placed
As if it were by pencil traced,
Lighted by the fading rays
Of the sun's descending blaze.
Now with fainter force it shines,
Dimmer grow its edging lines,
Till, in liquid air and light,
It dissolves from mortal sight.

Farewell, voyager of air,
Lovely scenes will greet thee there.
Far below, thy eyes may view
Ocean's rippling waters blue,
Narrow creeks, and rivers wide,
Glimpsing with a silver tide
'Neath the pale beams of the moon,
Or the fiery flash of noon;

GODDARD'S ASCENSION

Scenes of life and scenes of death,
Sublimity above, beneath.
Looking downward to the plain,
Thou mayst see the homes of men,
Cities broad, with crowded squares,
Ever crowded thoroughfares.
There, thou mayst behold below,
Men, like mice, go to and fro.
These are creatures of a day,
Thou, like them, art formed of clay.

When the moon is gleaming bright,
When the earth lies bathed in light,
And the hollow dome of blue
Bounds thy far extending view,
While the pale stars light the sky,
Look not with unfired eye
On that vast sublimity.
Think of him who made it so,
Him who taught the stars to glow,
Him who marks the pathless trace
Of planets in unmeasured space,
Guiding, with a force unseen,
Awful Nature's whole machine.

Thou wilt feel a speechless love,
Born within thy spirit, move;
In the chaos of thy mind,
A definite religion find.
Thou wilt learn to know and feel
Him who holds thy woe and weal

SWIMMING THE OHIO DURING A FLOOD

In the hollow of his hand.
And when thou again shalt stand
Safe on earth, thy tranquil breast
May be with holier feelings blest,
Feeling how small and weak are we,
Compared with God's immensity.

Cincinnati, 1860

Swimming the Ohio During a Flood

DARK flowing river, I have passed
Thy rapid channel, safe at last.
Its waters, swelled by weeks of rain,
Have tried to baffle me, in vain.
You did your best to bear me down
Below the creek that skirts the town;
But I, with lusty limbs and skill,
Still rode thy white capped billows well,
And straightly crost, from shore to shore,
Despite thy sounding current's roar.

Fair river, if I safely glide
Through life, as on thy bounding tide,
Unscathed by all the dangers there,—
Sorrow, Affliction, and Despair—
And every ill and every strife,
The driftwood of the tide of Life,
And reach, in peace, the heavenly shore,
As I did thine, I ask no more.

Fragment

FROM ATLANTIS

AND I awoke, and thought
Upon the past, that solemn drama
Of Comedy and Tragedy that, here,
Is ever acting on the stage of Time,
With God for its composer, who alone
Can tell its awful argument.

And we, beholding thro' a darkened glass,
May wonder at its pantomime,
Unknowing of the plot. And, then,
I thought of that strange consciousness
That lies within us, and by which
The unseen and the infinite are placed
Within our vision, and by which
The inner spirit hath a fleeting glimpse,
Hath power to cast aside
The curtain of Futurity and see
The fearful. Will be

To display
Honor and fame and happiness
To thoughtless boyhood. To maturer years,
A hard and rugged road, thick-strewn
With cares and disappointment, and to age,
The grass, the churchyard, and the grave.
Or, with reverted glance, to see
The actors of a former age
Portrayed with loving imagery,

THE DEATH OF A FRIEND

With color, motion, light and shade,
And all the attributes of light and life,
Till they become realities, and we,
Absorbed in their grand action, grow
To be a part of it, and feel,
And see, and breathe, and live like them.
Such scenes the spirit sees, and feels
As if, while sleep's oblivious hand,
With chill, black fingers on our eyes,
Weighed down our sensuous natures, she
could go
Short journeys to another world.

1863

The Death of a Friend

ENOUGH! I will no longer weep,
Fruitless, my tears are given,
Tho' I have lost a friend on earth,
I have one more in heaven.

Cincinnati, .

Translation

FROM AESCHYLUS—PROMETHEUS VINCTUS

NOW, AT creation's utmost bounds, we come
To Cythra's waste, a trackless wild.
Vulcan! 't is thine the message to perform
Which Jove decreed, against the rocks
This daring wretch to bind
In links indissoluble, of rock formed chains.
Thy glorious prerogative he stole, and gave
To mortal men the glow of fire,
Aider of every art. For this foul crime,
'T is fitting that he should atone,
That, hence, he may be taught to fear
The sovereignty of mighty Jove,
And curb his philanthropic soul.

Cratus and Bia, as to you
Jove's mandate its fulfillment has.
No farther obstacle remains—
But I am fearful thus to bind,
Perchance, by violence, a kindred god
Fast to this winter beaten cliff.
But 't is a stern necessity to me
To summon courage to my heart.
Alas! it is a fearful thing
To disregard the words of Jove.
Thee, thou enthusiast vain, the child
Of right directing Themis, I
Shall rivet to this barren rock.

TRANSLATION

Here, thou shall neither mortal voice nor form
behold.

Scorched by the withering glare of day,
Thou 'lt lose the bloom of beauty, and the night,
Joyful to thee, with spangled robe,
Shall overshad the lingering light.

Joyful, again, the rising sun
Shall lift the hoary mist of morn,
And ever, the ills of present woes
Shall rock thee, for unborn as yet
Is thy release. Thou hast reaped
A bitter harvest from philanthropy.

A god, free from the wrath of other gods,
Thou hast bestowed to mortal men
Honors more numerous than just,
For which thou shalt stand sentinel
Upon this lonely and deserted crag—
Upright and sleepless—not bending a knee,
And sadly shalt thou utter forth
Many a futile tear and groan.
Jove's heart is hard to supplicate,
And stern are those with recent power.

1861

Fragment

Helen—

Thou seemest mournful.

Gordon—

Well, in truth,
I am not happy, for the light
That buoyed up my spirit, now
Hath, like that setting sun,
Sunk to the verge of night.

Helen—

But thou
Hadst better, if it is a blow,
Bear it in patience, and ere long,
Time and our mother Nature will,
Like skillful nurses, cure
The wounds of temporary grief.

Gordon—

Temporary grief! O! never more
Shall time eradicate the scars
Left by thy heartless perfidy.
Once I had happiness and peace,
The peace of childhood's gentle hours.
Those days of innocence are gone,
And sorrow comes—but yet I think
That I remember ecstasy and bliss,
Only three weeks ago; how dark
And dismal is the contrast now!

FRAGMENT

Helen—

Grief follows joy
As night's black darkness follows on
Behind the footsteps of the day;
But still it does not last—
The rosy light shall shine again
Thro' her eyelashes, damp and cold,
And Nature smile at coming dawn.

Gordon—

Night's blackness is too feebly dim
To be a simile, compared
Unto the darkness of the soul.
To him, that hath a broken heart,
No day, with radiating beams,
Ever shall dawn.

Helen—

Thou 'lt soon forget
That ever such a being lived as I.
For there are lovelier climes than this
And faces fairer far than mine,
Which, by an inadvertent glance,
Hath done so much to wound thee;
And hearts more worthy of thy love,
And willing to return thy passion,
Which my cold nature can not do.
Thy beauty and thy gentleness
Are lovely, and they will be loved.
Thou 'lt soon forget.

FRAGMENT

Gordon—

The grave shall close
Deeply around me, and the soil will bloom
In darkest green above my narrow bed;
The sun shall glimmer from yon sky,
Over my silent dwelling place,
Ere I forget thee. I shall sleep, alone,
In peace. I ask not happiness.

Helen—

What do you say? Will you dismiss,
By the keen edge of glittering steel,
Or by the force of powder, or of lead,
Thy spirit to the unknown land?
Or poison drugs? O! do not do
This action rash. We do not prize
The cheerful sunshine of this world,
Till it is gone from us forever.
Would'st thou shut up, alas! thy ear
To the soft music of the Summer wind,
Thy father's or thy mother's voice,
And thy sweet sister's accents soft?
Or would'st thou close thine eyes
Forever on the stars, the forests, and
The forms of those you love
And who love you? O no!
Sooner than see so sad a fate
Pressing upon thee, I would link
My life eternally with thine.

1861

To Doctor Kane

AH! why does that bell pour its wail on the air,
And whence are those mourners in sorrows array?
O! why beats the muffled drum notes of despair,
As they wend on their desolate way?

The sailor has past to his home in the skies,
And the heart of his country is sad and forlorn,
And the mourners that follow with watery eyes
Shall deposit his dust in its urn.

Near the home of his childhood they'll lay him
to rest,
And the grass in the Spring will bloom fair o'er
his brow.

By the love of his country his soul shall be blest,
And his tomb will be honored below.

There, calmly he'll rest on his pillow of mold,
All his hardships and troubles are o'er.
His form shall not shiver with Labrador's cold,
No breakers around him shall roar.

A tombstone they'll place on the spot where he's laid,
But in time that will sink to decay,
While the monuments left in our hearts will not
fade,
But grow brighter and brighter as years sweep
away.

Cincinnati, 1856

Lines

BLACK clouds hang threatening on the sky,
Bleak Winter holds his reign on high.
No more, on yonder hills, we see
The green leaves in their dancing glee—
But frozen, rustling boughs, and bare,
Rattle at every changing air.
The pond and rivulet are closed,
Whose clear, blue waters once amused
Our boyish hearts; from its green side
We cast our tackle in the tide,
And watched the light cork, with impatient
eye,
Till the pale starlight lit the sky.

The night wind howls a blustering tone,
The vacant streets are sad and lone.
Around the well-filled, glowing hearth,
Vainly we make attempt at mirth.
A gloom seems on our spirits cast,
We sigh to hear the mournful blast.

Such thoughts were mine, but, by my will,
I keep my boding liver still.
No dreary thoughts ascend my brain
To goad me with an inward pain.
Great Homer now demands my care,
The bard who sung the Trojan war,

FANNIE

And the light strains that Horace sung,
That man was gay when he was young.
These studies, with mathematics, fill
The time that others can not kill.
But, when the Spring returns again,
And grass redecks the withered plain,
When Nature, with her brightest green,
Shall clothe and beautify the scene,
And vocalize the vales and hills
With warbling birds and tumbling rills,
Then shall my sloth be laid aside;
You 'll find me by the streamlet's side.

Cincinnati, 1858

Fannie

WHEN I, the streamlet's wave, can bind,
Or fetter up the wanton wind,
Or bid the fleecy clouds to fly
In altered courses, thro' the sky,
Then, Fannie, will I try to win
Your fickle heart, and not till then.

1860

Fragment

THE life of mortal man, how brief,
How changeful, and how full of grief!
O! when the spirit bursts the chain
That binds her to this house of pain,
To what far region does she fly?
To yonder orbs that light the sky?
Or does the wheel of cruel Fate
Compel her to a darker state,
A dim existence, far below
The one we walk and breathe in now,
When, lost to any fixed abode,
She haunts the place thro' life she trod,
Or, mingled with the viewless air,
The light winds waft her everywhere?
Or do we course a living chain
Of birds and beasts, and come again
To view the starlight and the sun,
When a full thousand years are gone?
O! when the road of death is traced,
Must we behold black Pluto's waste,
The shadowy Styx, the doleful sky,
Unlovely to the pilgrim's eye?
Shall Hermes, with his fearful wand,
Conduct us to the silent land,
And Styx, with nine involving rounds,
Confine us in infernal bounds?
Shall Lethe, with oblivion's stream,
Make life a sad, forgotten dream?

FRAGMENT

Or, are our Christian teachings true?
Does yonder ether hide from view
A land of peace, a happier heaven,
Where those may dwell who are forgiven?
I know not this, I know, alone,
That life is short, and quickly gone.
The turf will bloom above our heads,
And daisies deck our narrow beds.
On us the lurid Summer sun
Shall dart his burning arrows down,
And cold November's sleety sky
Shall spread her mantle where we lie.
And those we loved so long and well,
How long will grief within them dwell?
Our friends may weep, yet soon forget,
And other lovers will be met;
And we will pass from memory,
And none for us may breathe a sigh,
While the great world will move once more,
As careless as it moved before.

Cincinnati, 1858

The Chapel Bell of Miami University

THE Chapel Bell, the Chapel Bell
Rings out its wailing sound;
Disturbing, by its heavy swell,
The air for miles around.

At its fell stroke, from off my eyes
Sleep's dull enchantment quickly flies,
And sweet dreams say farewell.
When shall I ever cease to curse
That hateful Chapel Bell!

I lose my breakfast every morn—
Compelled to hurry up,
I leave the griddle cakes untouched,
The coffee in the cup.

Across the green, in haste, I fly,
While, loud, against the morning sky,
Rings out the constant swell.
Would that I had an iron tongue
To curse the Chapel Bell!

Oxford, 1861

The Fish and the Butterfly

A FABLE

THEY tell a tale of yonder spring
Which winds its way, meandering,
And sparkles as it gently flows
From the deep fountains, whence it rose.
It winds its way thro' lone recess,
Thro' forest, gloom, and wilderness,
Where the dark trees, overhead,
Eternal shadow, on it, shed.
The boughs so thick together grow
The sunlight, thro' them, can not glow,
And it has run its winding maze
Since Father Adam's ancient days.

'T was in that season of the year
When Beauty meets the eye and ear,
And Nature, to our eager gaze,
Her most enchanting works displays;
When bower and grove and blooming hill
With warbling birds, are never still,
And Zephyr, from his emerald bowers,
An odor flings
From off his wings,
As if it were a land of flowers,
That, wearied, with his lengthened chase,
And seeking for a resting place,
A painted fly espied the brook.
Delighted, by its shady look,

THE FISH AND THE BUTTERFLY

He closed his tired Wings and sank
Upon a stone, which near the bank
Just lifted up its slimy sides
Above the surface of the tides,
So that the topmost part was laved,
When a light wind the water waved.
There sat, and listened to the sound
The shallow ripples made around,
And lulled, by its harmonious swell,
Into a strain of musing fell.

For sweet sounds have a magic spell,
And even tones produced by art
Inspire with lofty themes the heart.

But Nature, with a softer strain,
Can touch the heart with magic power
Recall the days of bliss again,
And shed a light in Sorrow's hour.

Thus, longer had he sat, when, lo!
A fish espied him from below,
And, lifting, from the waves, his head,
Thus to the butterfly he said:
"May I your bright acquaintance seek?
Tho' king, I am your servant meek.
'T is long since I have seen so fair
A mingling of all colors rare,
And many a bird of richest hue,
With gaudy feathers, hath met my view.
My brother reigns, some miles above,
His stream is not o'erhung by grove.

THE FISH AND THE BUTTERFLY

The skies of Summer, blue and bright,
Are all presented to his sight.
Once I remember being there,
When clouds were dark, and skies unfair,
The rain was falling thick and fast,
The forest waved before the blast.
My brother's heart was sunk in fear,
And e'en my own not free from care.
So much was swelled, the streamlet's tide
A sweeping torrent grew, and wide.
From dawn till late in afternoon,
The showery rains came pouring down.
But just before the sun was set,
While yet the eastern clouds were wet,
A bending arch o'erspanned the air,
And every hue of heaven was there.
I took it for a sign of peace;
It bade the storming tempest cease.
The wind was still, the torrent sunk away,
And earth was gilded by departing day.
Thy fanning wings are like that bow—
On both, the self-same colors glow,
And Beauty gave thy gaudy hue,
As sunshine paints the morning dew!"

The flattered fly an answer gave:
"Dweller of the dreary wave,
I doubt not but you say the truth.
Since my very earliest youth

THE FISH AND THE BUTTERFLY

The members of my airy race
Have given me the highest place,
And all of my commands obey,
With true subservience to my sway.
But who art thou (for I must know),
Who dwells the sighing waves below,
Who so anxious seems to be
To come, with friendly terms, to me?"

The fish, from out his native tide,
With sophic words, again replied:
"The monarch of the stream am I,
Few kings with me in splendor vie.
My palace is a mossy block,
And caves are hollowed in the rock.
There is a courtier, in my hall,
Who traced this stream o'er dam and fall,
And swam thro' all the watery plain
Where leviathan holds his reign.
He says the coral reefs divine
Equal not this rock of mine.
I have no sparkling gems, 't is true,
Diamonds and pearls I never knew;
But my pure stream is far more clear
Than ocean's brightest tints appear."

" 'T is true, your stream is clear and bright
The weary pilgrim feels delight,
When first, thy rippling waters blue
Come sparkling to his distant view,

THE FISH AND THE BUTTERFLY

And, from the noontide scorching heat,
Does to thy shaded banks retreat."

"Since thou art empress of thy race,
While I hold power in this place,
Since wearied by protracted flight
Far from thy own regions bright,
(Soon will fall the shades of night)
On friendly terms, we ought to be,
Accept my hospitality!
If you admire my realm, above,
My grassy banks and shady grove,
Come, view my rocky halls below,
Where far more wondrous beauties glow.
The laden board 's already spread
To supply a monarch's need—
A couch, on which thy limbs to lay
And sweetly dream till dawn of day,
Softer than that slimy stone
Which you now are sitting on.
And see! 't is clouding in the west,
The winds are waking from their rest.
Haste! for should it rain and blow
Thy rocky isle will overflow."

Off from the rock she lightly flew
And lighted on the wavelets blue.
One bound, the fish is at her side,
His cruel jaws are opened wide,
A single snap, and all is o'er,
The butterfly will sail no more.

Fragment

FROM CREOLE GIRL

As if chill winds and frozen skies
Forbid our warmer natures rise,
And drive our wild desires in,
To smoulder and burn out within,
Beneath the equinoctial line,
Where scorching suns arise and shine,
Where endless Summer charms the eyes
With tranquil nights and starry skies.

Love is not that cold, heartless thing
To bloom an hour and then take wing,
As if in nature, as in clime,
That love is warm, and mocks at time,
Disinterested and intense,
A passion, less of mind than sense.
Such love was hers, she did not think,
She did not fear Destruction's brink,
She only felt; she only knew
She loved him, who, before your view,
Now lingers on the verge of death
And whispers, with his failing breath,
A story that he hates to tell,
Which only, by the fear of hell,
Is dragged from out that silent cell,
Its slumbering place, for many a year
Unknown to human eye or ear.

* * * * *

REMORSE

Father! there is a sympathy,
A warm, unseen, magnetic tie,
That binds our hearts in chains of Love
With those whose hearts, responsive, move.

1862

Remorse

THE mind that weeps o'er bloody crimes,
Despair and anguish riven,
Tho' done, they were, in former times
And feels 't is unforgiven,
All earth to him's a prison lone,
Within his breast, despair,
His heart, though harder than a stone,
Is pierced by torment everywhere.

Like him, who on Caucasus bound,
Whose vitals were a vulture's prey,
But yet, still more of substance found
As they were rent away.
By his confiding passions tost,
He tries, in vain, to flee
And drown his sorrows with the host,
Who pass their days in jollity.
In vain, naught can his night dispel,
No ray of Hope is given,
This earth to him's an early hell,
He sees no future heaven.

A Wish

O! THAT a little cot were mine,
Within the gloomy wood,
Its windows hung with fair woodbine,
And near the running flood,
Where I might spend my peaceful life,
Far from the city's noise and strife,
To watch the seasons, in their round,
First deck, then desolate, the ground,
And, in the gloom of middle even,
Hold converse with the lights of heaven.

What tho' my lone abode were rude,
Far in the desert solitude,
I would not leave its quiet walls
To dwell within the richest halls
That man can frame, or art can give,
If there, in peace, I could not live.
I could not breathe the poisoned air
Of courts, for degradation there
Stalks rampant, while my woodland home
Half hidden in the forest gloom,
And shaded by the foliage dense,
Seems like the type of innocence.
If Jennie, there, with me would dwell,
That spot were not a little cell;
Her gentle looks and loving eyes
Would make the place a paradise.

1857

The Outcast

By Ohio's banks of green,
When the Summer paints the scene,
'Neath a locust's waving shade,
Dwelt a long-forsaken maid.
From Georgia's sunny land she came,
None knew her history or name,
Save that misfortune made her roam,
And, once, she had a happy home.

In some balmy, summer night,
'Neath the moon's unclouded light,
You might have heard her warbling, there
Notes of sorrow and despair.
Thro' the summer, green and long,
Still she sang her cheerless song.
She sang of youth's commencing scene,
The happy home where she had been,
How cheerful, with its fitful glare,
The hearth fire burned at evening there.

She was the flower, whose early grace
Cast beauty in that humble place.
Her parents hoped (Hope often errs)
That, when arrived at later years,
Her angel presence would assuage
The closing of their pilgrimage.

THE OUTCAST

Alas! Alas! those hopes were air,
Their place was taken by despair;
They fell away, like July's rose,
Beneath the blast that Winter blows,
Or, as that Winter's frost work, frail,
Dissolves before the Summer's gale.

A stranger came from far away,
From Albion's clime of vapors gray.
By words of gentleness, he moved
The maiden's heart until she loved—
Yet, never crowned the foolish bliss,
Or changed her youthful name to his.
When her affections he had gained,
He saw that Honor still remained,
Nor could he rest till that was gone,
Then left her ruined and undone.

She left her home and sunny clime,
Where Spring and Summer fill the time,
And lived the life of those who err,
On the wide earth a wanderer.
Since then, her wretched course had been
A mingled web of grief and sin,
And now, an outcast, sad and lorn,
Her breast by every passion torn,
All feelings gone, but grief and pride,
She dwelt by lone Ohio's side.

* * * * *

THE OUTCAST

The Autumn winds, o'er rock and hill,
Now shriek, with hollow wailings shrill.
The white caps in the rapid river
Rush upstream with a mad endeavor,
And the deep waters, once so blue,
Look cold and cheerless to the view.
The sun had sunk, with feeble light,
And quickly came the wintry night.

From out her weary house of pain,
She went, but ne'er returned again,
And sought the river's rocky side,
Where, churned to foam, the yellow tide
Soughed up the bank before the wind,
As if enraged to be confined.
She cast her countenance to the sky,
The cold moon, and the stars on high.
Once more, she said, "Farewell to you,"
Pale denizens of ether blue.
Oft I have watched your course in heaven
At midnight, and at early even.
If Nature's God, on Nature's face,
Did outlines of expression trace,
I've fancied I have seen, in thine,
A sympathy for griefs like mine.
Farewell again! my weary breast
Hath long wished for its final rest.
The waves may wash above my head,
And cold and cheerless be my bed.

THE OUTCAST

I look upon them without care,
My wanderings will be ended there,
And the cold waters, with their gloom,
Shall be a quiet, peaceful tomb."

The night has past, the driving storm
Hath dashed on shore, a female form,
To molder in the open air,
And lodged upon a sandbar there.
'T is she, the lone, forsaken maid,
Who dwelt beneath the locust's shade.
They raised her from the restless wave,
And placed her in a fitting grave.
Above her, blooms a hemlock tree,
Whose verdure glows eternally;
A willow, too, that bends its head
As if in mourning for the dead.
And fragrant roses scent the air,
And gentle winds are blowing there.
The river's silver ripples sigh,
As, gliding fast, they hurry by
And sing a lullaby of peace,
A music that will never cease.
No more will fell invading care
Disturb her peaceful slumbers there;
No more despair and sorrow come
To rack her in her narrow home.

1858

The Girls

O! THE girls, the girls,
With their beautiful curls,

Whatever was done without them!
They're the soul of life,
And the cause of strife.

They are fickle in mind,
And, with spirits gay,

They change like the wind
On an April day,
But that's not all about them.

They make one's heart burn,
But they love in return.

Who would not be lonely without them?
When their affections are set,
They never forget.

Their souls are as pure
As a fount in the shade.

Their delight is to cure
The wounds they have made,
And that is all about them.

1856

To Jennie R—

DECEMBER's winds are wailing,
How bitterly and cold;
The flaky snow is paling
The wintry frozen mold.

I stand where grew the hawthorn hedge,
No hawthorns now are there,
The elms extend their leafless boughs,
And waver, cold and bare.

The owlet, in the forest,
Hoots out his omened tale
And casts his dismal prophecies
Upon the howling gale.

Beneath this birch tree's shadow,
When Summer held her reign,
We spent its moonlit evenings,
My unforgotten Jane.

'T is not drear Nature's aspect
That spreads the place around,
'T is not the icy mantle
That robes the frozen ground,

That makes me feel so mournful,
For if 't were leafy June,
My spirit would be just as sad,
My heart as much cast down.

FOR A DOG'S COLLAR

For she is gone, who was the charm
That bound the spot to me.
The sunshine, in her absence, here
Would dull and cheerless be.

But now, that Winter comes to make
The dreary scene more drear,
My very heart within me dies,
I can not linger here.

I go away, to move among
The busy paths of men,
My eyes shall not behold this spot
For many a year, again.

1856

For a Dog's Collar

My name it is Cæsar,
From Newfoundland I came;
I was raised by my master,
James Wilken, his name.
My teeth know their duty,
I'm hardened to fear,
Beware, rogues and plunderers,
Come not too near!

1856

Fragment

SOME may blame his cold indifference,
And he would merit their severity,
Had not his pilgrimage have been
A tale of sorrow scarcely yet begun;
His heart a history, he alone,
Skilled in its mystic language, knows
The loves and griefs recorded there.

And he reads, day by day, its leaves,
And pores above the unforgotten past,
Alone, in silence. Few would dream
That reckless face could ever wear
The look of grief it often does.
'T is not for present ills he mourns,
But for a long gone happiness.
He thinks of lovely forms that he beheld
In his remotest boyhood. Still,
His memory makes them live again,
Almost as lifelike as before.
He seems to see their deep eyes shine,
The long rings of their waving hair
Catching the purple light, and over necks
Swanlike and snowy, streaming down
In darkness and inimitable grace.

And he remembers one, whose lineaments
Wore an angelic loveliness,
Which simple beauty never yet could give,
Nor artist, with his pencil, trace

FRAGMENT

On canvas, nor sculptor's hand
Chisel from cold and lifeless stone.
He loved her. Long his heart
Bowed down, with deeper adoration,
Before her beauty, than it would before
A loftier and more sacred shrine.

And yet,

He feared to tell her all, and still
He fancied that his burning love
Met with a full return.
But as the darkness follows on the tracks
Of sunlight, so the change
In human life, from happiness to grief.
The time for parting came at last;
They heard each other's last farewell.
How different they were! His spirit felt,
Crushed by the blow, as the tall elm,
When leveled by the fiery wrath
Of Summer thunder storms, but still
His face betrayed no outward mark
Of passion, or of sorrow, for he saw
She cared not for him. All his pride
Revolted, so the secret died with him,
Or rather lived, and like a canker, gnawed
She never knew that he, she left,
Was other than a friend, and, as from one
She parted; grasping his hand, she said,
Sweetly and murmuringly, "Good-bye!"
And the next moment she was gone.

1859

Fragments

NIGHT's gloom was on the silent sky,
The crescent moon was riding high,
Over the blue, ethereal plain,
Surrounded by her starry train.

I stood upon a boundless plain,
Dark Volcan rose before my eyes,
I tried to see its crest, in vain,
That pierced the deep blue skies.

Every way the scene was fair,
Not a cloudlet dimmed the air,
And the pale stars, with watchful glow,
Looked dimly down on all below.
Their light fell on each sharp peak, there
That reared its summit high in air,
Until, it seemed, the mountain's sides
Were coursed by liquid, silver tides,
So did each music rippling stream
Twinkle in the lunar beam.

There is a language in the sky
That tells the tale of destiny;
And every orb's uncertain light
Shows something to the sëer's sight.
Of mystic knowledge, he can see
What has been and what yet will be.
Such language hath belonged to me
Since my remotest infancy.

FRAGMENTS

A necromancer I was born, and know
All the arcana, dark, can show;
The secrets of the air and skies,
And earth, and ocean, meet my eyes.
My art can tell where darkly shine
The diamonds of the unfathomed mine,
Or where, in earth's capacious store,
Is hid her wealth of golden ore.
Then spoke the king, with brow severe:
"To brag, thou art not summoned here,
If thou hast skill, thy better part
Will be to show, not boast, your art.
You gazed on Volcan and the sky
When the pale stars were beaming high.
What fate, for us, lurked in their sheen,
Was good, or evil, most therein?"

* * * * *

In yonder star-gemmed field of blue,
A vision met my eagle view,
A lovely city decked the plain,
Around it was a lawless train.
I saw the camp-fire's ruddy glare,
I heard the conversation there,
Their brows were knit in angry mood,
And all their speeches were of blood.

I looked again—the city fair,
In smouldering heaps, was lying there;
And many a corpse was strewn around,
And sanguine stains were on the ground

FRAGMENTS

And warriors, not of Aztec race,
Walked darkly through the ruined place,
And searched for gold that might be hid
Within each half-burnt pyramid.

I looked once more, this time I saw
A sight that froze my blood with awe—
There was a man of haughty mood,
And, clamoring fierce, around him stood
That lawless train—they seized on him;
With chains they wrapt each manly limb
They bound him strongly to a tree,
 With lighted fagots at his feet.
He did not blanch, the sight to see,
 Nor writhed before the heat.
Scorched, by the fast arising flame,
His hissing flesh cooked on his frame,
Yet not a single sound gave he
As outward sign of agony.
The glow of his calm eye was clear,
His lip but held a bitter sneer,
And when he drew his latest breath
He seemed victorious in death.

My trance was gone; and all around
Was silent, solitude profound.
But as I woke, the hoot owl's cry
Wailed on the winds discordantly.
O! luckless sound; O! vision drear,
Some evil to the land is near.

FRAGMENTS

“O Guatimozin! king, beware!
Thy every footstep guard with care!
Far better would have been thy fate
Had’st thou been born in lower state,
And oped thy infant eyes to see
The bitter ills of poverty,
Instead of reigning on the throne
Of Montezuma, dead and gone.”
“Yes, even now,” Malmistic cried,
“Our foes are round on every side.
Who knows, but on the dawn of light
Black cinders mark our city’s site.”

Fear seized on Guatimozin’s soul;
That, iron will could not control.
The cold blood hurried to his heart,
Causing every nerve to start,
And the dense ringlets of his hair
Stood bristling upright in the air.

But pride soon came to his relief—
He felt he was the people’s chief.
He would not let a sign appear
To show them he could suffer fear.
And, with a trembling voice, he spoke;
How changed his husky accents broke:

“Malmistic, dost thou come to prate
And scare me with thy dreams of fate?
Thy tale may fright some craven thing,
But not a fearless Aztec king,

To J. R.

The scion of an ancient line,
The favorites of the power divine.
When, tell me, was it ever said,
In noonday's light, or midnight shade,
That Guatimozin was afraid?
E'en if I thought firm fate's decree,
Foreshadowed in thy prophecy
And thy ill-omened visions, true,
Their terrors could not blanch my view."

To J. R.

BRING the planet readers here,
Put their science to the test,
Madam Blanche will make it clear,
What is dwelling in my breast.
"O! what change is wrought by care!
Sorrow, Gloom, and Love, we see.
Happiness that should be there
Is gone; a mournful wreck is he.
Let us bring the cause to view,
Whence this grieving and despair.
See! a girl, with eyes of blue,
And wavy locks of golden hair.
Diviner! quickly tell her name,
Let me know the girl you view!
Jennie R—r, by the flame
That burns within me, it is true!"

The Red Sea Passage

UPON the Red Sea's lonely shore,
A band of Hebrews stood,
The cloud of fire shone, before,
Above the briny flood.

But what a marvel, to be told,
The dark and dreadful tide,
Like glassy walls, apart is rolled
And stands on either side.

Led by the flaming cloud on high,
They crossed to Persia's strand,
While Egypt's hosts, behind them, fly
With sword and spear in hand.

But, with a roar, the salty brines
Round Egypt's thousands close,
While, safe on shore, the Hebrew lines
Behold their drowning foes.

Equestrian, footman, charioteer,
Whelmed in the ocean's power,
Their monster gods deserted there
In that last trying hour.

And Pharaoh's wealth, and glory vain,
Are buried in the tide;
And he who dared dispute with God
Is punished for his pride.

Cincinnati, April 6, 1855

Jilted Willie

BLITHE Willie was a stately lad
As Nature e'er designed.
One might ride all a Summer's day
And not his equal find.
He loved a little black-eyed lass,
As lovely as a filly.
The saucy Bess, of Lexington,
Was all the world to Willie.

There came a strapping youth from Maine
That enterprising nation;
The winsome Bess waked in his heart
Hymenial inclination.
But all the gossips sneered at him,
And said he must be silly,
With such a face as he possest,
To dare to rival Willie.

Quoth he, "To charms of face or form
I make but small pretension—
Bowlegged am I, and spindle shanked,
My mouth needs no extension.
My mother's ugliest brat was I,
Except my sister Tillie—
But O! I've got the Yankee grit
To soon dispose of Willie."

JILTED WILLIE

He had two yellow, squinting eyes,
 His hair was rather sorrel,
And pimples made his face appear
 As red and rough as coral.
He told the artless Bess that she
 Was fairer than a lily,
And that the Lord had brought him out
 From Maine to rival Willie.

He bragged about his farm at home,
 His wealth in land and cattle.
When Mammon fights on Cupid's side,
 They're bound to win the battle.
He probed her heart with golden dart,
 Her manner grew less chilly.
He married her, and carried her,
 In triumph, off from Willie.

Now, Willie seeks the silent glen
 And spends his days in weeping;
And oft his sighs are heard to rise
 When happier men are sleeping.
May Fortune make that Yankee's life
 A rough road, harsh and hilly!
He's done an awful spurt of work—
 He's broke the heart of Willie.

Fairmount, January 10, 1868

Tippling

HEED not thou Temptations' speech,
Nor drink the rosy wine—
Its poison to the soul doth reach,
Though brightly it may shine.
'T is pleasant to the ruined taste,
And calms the sorrowed brain,
But walking after, in hot haste,
Disease and Death are in its train.
I've seen a man of rosy hue,
With all his prospects fair;
The next time that he met my view
I saw him in despair.
And when I asked his comrades, why
He was in that sad state,
They gave a cold and hard reply—
That he was an inebriate.
Then, tho' among the young and gay
They tempt thee to the wine,
And try to laugh thy fears away,
In firmness, still decline.
Hast thou not heard of Maelstrom's tide
That rolls in thundering sound?
No ship that dares o'er sea to ride
Will tempt her giddy round.
Do thou of drunkenness beware!
'T is like the Maelstrom's wave,
And myriads, on life's ocean fair,
Engulfed within its vortex drear,
Have found an early grave.

Emma's Leap

MOUNT REISINGBERG stands vast and high,
With snowy summits in the sky,
Far o'er the level of the main
Where everlasting frosts remain.
There vernal Zephyrs fail to melt,
And summer suns pass by, unfelt,
And stainless, now appears that snow,
As when, a thousand years ago,
Its rocky caves of solitude
Sheltered the heathen giant brood.
Below it, spreads, on either hand,
Bohemia and Silesia's land.

The daughter of the mountain king—
Fair Emma, once, in early Spring—
Beheld the giant Bohdo near,
Who fixed on her his lustful leer.
And he was mounted on his steed,
In ancient legends, famed for speed.

In all Bohemia's forests 'round,
No match for Bohdo might be found.
His fellow monsters shrunk with fear
Whene'er his form was hovering near.
No danger could his courage daunt,
No mortal knew his evening haunt.
For weapon, he, a sturdy oak,
Short off its giant stem, had broke,
And formed a club, that, in the fight,
Left tokens of its wielder's might;

EMMA'S LEAP

That slew the wild-wolf in his lair
And, lifeless, stretched the mangled bear.

Full long had Bohdo sought to move
The tender maiden's heart to love.
She sighed, 't is true, but not for him,
Nor cared for strength or stratagem.
In vain, his tears and prayers and sighs,
She looked on him with scornful eyes,
And when he saw his suit had failed,
Fierce anger in his heart prevailed.
And, in his wrath, he did declare,
By all the powers of earth and air—
He would all obstacles defy
And make the damsel his, or die.

When Emma saw his frowning brow,
And called to mind his angry vow—
In wild affright, she spurred her horse
To save herself from death or worse.
Stern Bohdo saw; he slacked his rein,
And gave pursuit with might and main.
Through many a various scene and place,
They urged that swift and deadly race,
From cliff to cliff, from vale to vale,
Leaving, behind, the mountain gale.
Through the dark forest shades they pass
And over many a deep morass,
And, fast, their flying coursers press
Through wild Thuringia's wilderness.

EMMA'S LEAP

But Bohdo's steed on Emma's gains,
Short space between them now remains;
When, shooting far aloof in air,
She sees the rocky Hartz appear.
Up the steep sides, her smoking horse
Toils, faithful, with his failing force,
Until they gained a distant hight.
Here a deep chasm met her sight,
Dark, and terrific with the sound
Of waters in its depths profound.
Before that drear, aye blasting, sight,
Her courser paused, in sudden fright.
With Death before, and Death behind,
Despair came over Emma's mind.

With thundering tread and headlong speed
Behind, came Bohdo's panting steed.
(The rushing torrent's rapid flow
Rolled full a thousand feet below).
She saw; with virtuous wrath she burned,
Her self-possession all returned.
Before her was the dread abyss,
Behind, the fate of being his;
The first was hard; the second worse,
She, backward, flung her parting curse.

She called her father's sprites, to aid—
And next, the dreadful leap she made.
The powers unseen their strength supplied,
And, safe, she crossed the chasm wide.

EMMA'S LEAP

So strongly did her courser press,
With his hind hoofs, the precipice;
That full four cubits in the rock
His feet were driven by the shock;
And to this day, the mark remains.
Though stormy winds and beating rains
Have made the hollow less, yet they
Will never wear that dent away.
But, in the spring, her golden crown,
Into the dark abyss, went down.

His flying steed, did Bohdo urge
Until he reached the fatal verge.
Undaunted, by the frightful leap,
He strove to spring from steep to steep,
And, as he left the rock, 't is said,
He called infernals to aid,
And dreadful demons heard the spell,
And hastened from the shades of hell,
Resolved to serve their master there
And bear the leaping horse in air.
But vain their aid, and vain his spell,
For darkly, downward Bohdo fell.
Beneath the seething river's spray
He vanished from the light of day.

And on that spot, where lies the print
Of horse shoes in the solid flint,
The fiend of evil comes, 't is said,
When night hath her black mantle spread

EMMA'S LEAP

Above the sleeping world, to hold,
With his foul train, his orgies bold.
And it is told, and told with awe,
By those whose gifted vision saw—
By those whose spirit strengthened ear
Had superhuman power to hear—
That, in the witching noon of night,
A hell flame lights the lonely hight;
Infernal music wakes the air,
Infernal forms seem dancing there;
And horrid rites are all night done,
From twilight till the rising sun.
A tale, too fearful to be told
Except to men of natures bold,
That makes the children wail with fear,
Unfit for pregnant dames to hear.

To Bohdo, in the wrath of heaven,
A hideous canine form was given;
Vast and terrific to the sight,
And blacker than the noon of night,
And, in the roaring gulf, alone,
He holds his guard o'er Emma's crown.
No miser, in his thirst for gold—
No diver, in his art grown bold—
Shall lift it from the vortex drear
To glitter in the upper sphere.
But once, in long, succeeding days—
A youth, impelled by fame and praise,

EMMA'S LEAP

Descended in the deep, 't is said,
To drag the treasure from its bed.
At first, by fickle Fortune blest,
He raised it to the water's breast,
So that assembled nations there,
Beheld, above, its jeweled glare.
But, as he swung the crown on high,
In pride's untimely ecstasy,
It slipped and sunk; again he dove,
But ne'er returned to light above.
Aghast, the pale spectators stand
Like statues carved by sculptor's hand,
When they beheld, upon the flood,
A rising stream of crimson blood.

Since then, the weird and frightful scene
Hath no abode for mortals been.
With dread, the pilgrim nears the place,
With awe, beholds the footmark's trace.
Night's shadow veils the lone abyss,
The gulf and giddy precipice.
Eternal silence reigns around,
No voice in Nature gives a sound,
Except the growling, hoarse and low,
The hollow whirlpool makes below;
And wintry winds that sweep the sky
As if they fain would hurry by.
No bird, that wings the upper air,
Will build her nest or warble there.

DESERT OF MEMORY

The mountain huntsman will not dare
To linger till the twilight, there.
Afar, the buzzard guides his flight,
The eagle seeks a distant hight.
The voiceless spot remains alone
A solitude of wave and stone.

Fairmount, January 10, 1868

Desert of Memory

THERE 's a desert called Memory, pathless and wide,
Its broad plains are barren, no green thing is spied,
The pilgrim, who presses its sands with his feet,
Is wearied by distance, and faint by the heat.
But, scattered along in the desert, are seen
Small, lovely oases, covered with green,
Where the leaves of the palm groves are waving in air,
And the hearts of their children unshadowed by care.
O! who would not wish through those forests to
rove,
In those islands of pleasure, those gardens of Love!
But the pilgrim strays far on the hot sandy plain,
He searches for cool running streamlets in vain,
The mirage displays its fair visions to view,
He follows them, only to find them untrue.
The shadows of darkness descend in the air,
Far, far on the desert he sinks in despair.
His heart has one thought, and that thought is his
last,
Of the gardens of Love upon Memory's waste.

The Fisherman of Gotham

TWELVE men of Gotham went to fish,
A wise and witty band—
And some did in the water wade,
And some stood on the land.

But, as their homeward way they went,
One of the troop did say:
“In wading, we have done some feats
Most marvelous, this day.”

“I hope, when we do come to look,
That it may not be found
That any of our crew from home
Have come here to be drowned.”

“Nay, marry!” said another chap:
“About that let us see,
For when we did from home set out,
A crowd of twelve were we.”

Then, speedily, themselves they told,
Each did eleven tell;
For each forgot to count himself,
And grief upon them fell.

“Alack!” said they, “this woeful day
Some one of us is drowned.
Let us go back and see; perhaps
His body may be found.”

THE FISHERMAN OF GOTHAM

So up and down the brook they went,
With lamentations great,
Bewailing much the fate of him
Who now was fishes' bait.

Then came a courtier, riding by,
Who asked them what they did.
"Alas!" said they, "we have a friend
Beneath this water hid."

"To catch the fish within the brook,
We did come out this day,
And twelve of us did come along,
Twelve goodly men, and gay.

"Some one of us has here been lost,
We know not why or how;
For, in our number told, there's but
Eleven of us now."

"What" asked the courtier, "will you give
If I the twelfth man find?"
"All that our pockets hold," said they,
"With free and ready mind."

The courtier took the cash, and, next,
The counting was begun.
He rapped the first across the back,
Remarking—"Here is one."

JULIA

Thus, one by one, the courtier told—
Eleven of the train;
And every one he struck, he made
Roar lustily, with pain.

“Here is the twelfth,” said he, and well
He “walloped” him around.
“All thanks,” replied the Gothamites,
“You have our brother found.”

Cincinnati, 1867

Julia

JULIA hath no lustrous eye,
No trim and fairy form,
No snowy forehead, arched and high,
Where clustering tresses swarm.
She hath no light and tiny hand
Like that which waves a spirit’s wand,
Red lips, and rosy tinted cheeks,
She ne’er possessed at all.
The magic that she exercised
Was more than physical—
It was her heart, that beat so warm,
That gave her such a nameless charm.

1856

The Ocean

How sweet to be
Aside the sea,
And watch the swelling waves,
To hear the shore
Return the roar
When loud the tempest raves.

Or, where the blue
Extends to view
A sky reflecting plain,
A boundless tide,
Where, far and wide,
Great Neptune holds his reign.

No mortal man,
Since time began,
E'er saw the frozen pole,
No ship e'er found
The utmost bound
Where billows cease to roll.

What plummet line,
E'er cast in brine,
Its mysteries could show?
What diver here,
From human sphere,
Can tell what is below?

THE OCEAN

Fierce monsters dwell
Beneath the swell.
Of grim, terrific look,
The cuttles lay,
In wait for prey,
Behind the slimy rock.

The coral race,
In that dark place,
Their rocky homes uprear.
Though brief their day,
Their works will stay
Till earth shall disappear.

Beneath the deep,
In his last sleep,
Full many a sailor lies,
And many a bark,
In caverns dark,
Becomes the polyp's prize.

Yon whale, at ease,
Stretched on the seas,
Does, from his nostrils spout,
Against the beam,
A lucid stream
Of sparkling water, out.

THE OCEAN

Alas! full soon,
The dread harpoon
His harmless life will close.
Yon stately ship,
Upon the deep,
Bears his most cruel foes.

Boats leave her side,
And swiftly glide
Towards him, on the brine.
With lifted hands,
The Captain stands
To give the fatal sign.

With stealthy care,
They near him there.
At once the harpoons fly,
Through air they sail,
And reach the whale,
Aimed skillfully and nigh.

Around, the tide
With blood is dyed.
His bulk heaves to and fro.
He can't survive,
He gives the dive
And draws the rope below.

THE OCEAN

But still the boat
Remains afloat.
The cord the fish confines.
From struggles vain,
He calms again,
And slacker grow the lines.

But now, anew,
On Ocean's blue,
For breath—they see him rise—
And to that place
The tars give chase;
The whale before them flies.

They ply their oars
With all their powers—
And swiftly scud the main;
In his wake,
They overtake,
And wound him, once again.

The streaming flood
Of vital blood
He pours on Ocean's waves.
From every wound
It spouts around
The boat, in crimson laves.

THE OCEAN

With sinking strength
He dies; at length,
The sailors seize the spoil.
The lamp whose light
Now aids my sight,
Perhaps, consumes his oil.

Beneath her waves,
In coral caves,
The sea is all alright.
For diamonds lay
Beneath the spray,
Where all besides is night.

Her depths enfold
Cargoes of gold,
Below the surface far,
The conquerors' spoils
The fruits of toils,
The wealth of peace and war.

These shall lay
Till that great day
When the last trump shall sound
From overhead,
To wake the dead
From their long sleep profound.

THE OCEAN

'T is well, if they
Forever stay,
And never rise above.
Their shining spoils
Are seeds of broils
That break the bonds of love.

And hatred great,
They do create
'Twixt man and fellow-men.
Beneath the main
If they remain,
It is far better, then.

The man who pores
Along the shores
Will much instruction gain,
While rush along
The finny throng,
In their unnumbered train.

He stops to think,
Upon the brink,
Who made the myriad swarm.
He feels his mind
Toward God inclined,
With love and reverence warm.

THE OCEAN

Not in one place
Alone, we trace
The present Deity.
In wind, and air,
Yea! everywhere,
His goodness we can see.

God made, O! man,
When time began,
This goodly world for you.
All through your life,
In peace and strife,
Your welfare is his view.

Then praise his name,
For he may claim
Thy highest praise from thee.
On all below,
He does bestow
Blessings, incessantly.

The friends of earth,
Though great their worth,
Can all be weaned away.
But he above
Holds constant love,
And guards you night and day.

THE OCEAN

The swift yawl glides
Along the tides,
With Pleasure's party filled.
Their sails of white,
The yellow light
Of sunset seems to gild.

With skillful hands,
Its crew commands
Their ship upon the seas.
To catch the gale,
They hoist the sail,
And glide with swanlike ease.

But see arise
Upon the skies,
A dark and gloomy cloud!
The thunder roars,
The shower pours,
The vessel's mast is bowed.

The light'nings fly
Along the sky,
And gild the mountain waves.
Loud groans the sphere,
Chaos is near,
The angry ocean raves.

THE OCEAN

The brave bark leans,
Whirls, and careens,
The waves dash o'er her side.
Before the blast,
Her creaking mast
Almost bestirs the tide.

The sounding deep
Now goes to sleep—
A lull comes o'er its breast.
The wild wind's roar
Is heard no more,
All Nature is at rest.

Now, on the skies,
With thousand dyes,
Far shines the painted bow.
Beneath its arch,
Cloud warriors march
As from the field they go.

Now, from the West,
A sunbeam, blest,
Steals o'er the waters blue.
Thus Phœbus gives,
Before he leaves,
To Neptune, his adieu.

Cincinnati, March, 1855

Address to the Asiatic Cholera

ADDRESS

ALL HAIL! Old fellow! you have been
Tracking around the world unseen,
Yet not by any means unfelt, I ween,
 By those, whose luck
Ordained that, by thy arrow keen,
 They should be struck.

Though born by sacred Ganges' side,
No long time didst thou there abide.
The Eastern hemisphere was, far and wide
 By thee oppressed.
Next, thou didst cross Atlantic's tide
 To reach the West.

Three thousand miles before you lay,
Yet vain did Science strive to stay,
By quarantine, your trackless way.
 You reached our nation,
And here, renewed thy dismal sway
 In desolation.

Doctors who knew you long and well,
Tales, much to your discredit, tell.
They say, you ugly thief of Hell,
 That, in night's gloom,
You enter where your victims dwell,
 And seal their doom.

ADDRESS TO THE ASIATIC CHOLERA

You come not, like a noble foe—
Fair in the open daylight's glow.
The time, if you would let us know,
 Of your attack,
We might anticipate your blow
 And drive you back.

Some how, grim foe of human kind,
I've always thought that you designed
Some ill against me, in your mind,
 In stealthy way.
But if you come for me, you 'll find
 No easy prey.

Your friend, Old Small Pox, just in play,
Did oft whole tribes of people slay,
Till Doctor Jenner came that way,
 And Mary Montague.
He got his “bitters” on that day,
 Between those two.

I've always thought, you murdering sprite,
Some one would check you in your might.
Who knows but I may be the wight
 Who 'll save my race,
And thrash you off, in hasty flight,
 To your own place.

ADDRESS TO THE ASIATIC CHOLERA

REPLY

I've half a mind, you prince of sots,
To cramp your muscles into knots,
And start a rumbling in your guts
And turn you blue.

I'll make you think some sober thoughts
Or put you through.

I am the cause of many sighs,
And persons who are good and wise
Look on me, but with serious eyes.

It's my opinion,
Old Nick should have you, as his prize,
In Hell's dominion.

If you do n't cease your idle ranting—
And, in your fancied prowess, vaunting,
Some time, when I for game am hunting,
For you I'll steer.
And Faith! your courage will be wanting
When I come near.

ADDRESS

I have my weapons at command,
Grim bottles frown on every hand,
Brandy and camphor, opium and
Hydray submuriyas.
These will thy sly attack withstand,
However furious.

ON A RAINY AND DREARY DAY

But Winter comes, and you must flee
To warmer lands beyond the sea.
In the slant sunbeams, soon will be
 Not much caloric.
Adieu! We drink a health to thee,
 In paregoric.

On a Rainy and Dreary Day

SOME days there are, when people feel
Like making use of lead or steel,
Or coiling round their necks a rope,
And curing disappointed hope.

A day like this is now on hand.
Come all ye suicidal band,
Whet up your knives, your pistols load-
Or, if ye choose a gentler mode,
Infuse some strychnine in your bowls!
Hell's tired waiting for your souls.
To give you courage for the deed
A day like this is all you need.

Reflections on History

THERE is a passion, deeply cast
Within the human breast,
Which makes the memory of the past
An ever welcome guest.
Events that long have past away
The remnants of a former day,
Torn from the grasp of Fate,
And nations whelmed in deep decay,
Man loves to contemplate.

How, in the lonely forest wild,
Where the Indian war whoop rung,
The village rose, the garden smiled;
And the broad city sprung
In Nature's dark and deep recess;
Far, in the shady wilderness,
Art cast aside the gloom;
And industry, unchecked by toil,
Ploughed up the hard and stubborn soil,
And reared her smiling home.

We look along the mournful waste
Of Hoary years already past;
And tho' the contemplative breast,
By gloomy thoughts, may feel oppress,
The inner spirit owns the view,
Tho' painful, to be pleasing, too.

REFLECTIONS ON HISTORY

The thoughts that flood our memory
Are like the night owl's hooting cry—
Breaking forth, with startling power,
From some old and ruined tower,
Where, from the crevice of some stone,
She calls out, to the blanching moon,
Notes that make her hurry by
On her journey thro' the sky,
Or frights, with trills of grief or woe,
The weary traveler below,
Till each widely parted hair
Bristles horrent in the air,
And the cold sweat damps his brow.
Fain, from the spot his feet would go,
But that loud, unearthly yell
Holds him with an iron spell.
Let him struggle as he will,
Yet, he is its prisoner still.
Though those notes foretell of care,
Sorrow, grieving, and despair,
And a myriad of woes,
Still he lingers till they close.

The page of History appears
Thick with the records of preceding years,
Like to a crowded cemet'ry,
Where, 'neath the marble tombstones, lie
The buried dead of ages by—
And every sentence is a tomb—
The last, and the eternal, home

REFLECTIONS ON HISTORY

Of some great action, or some name,
To keep its glory, or preserve its shame;
Perhaps, the mightiest monument
Of lives, for Fame and Empire spent.

O! had the heroes of an era past
Known the short space their fame would last,
That, after they were dead and gone,
The world around would still go on,
That generations would arise and die,
Their fame melt to obscurity,
And naught remain to show that they had
been
Saving those names to, now and then,
Adorn the cold and lifeless page,
As relics of a former age,
They never would have squandered life
In troub'lous war and bloody strife.
The thrones they reigned on are now laid in
dust,
The glittering sceptres are bedimmed with rust,
The palaces wherein they dwelt
Time's paralyzing touch have felt,
Their broken pillars yet remain,
Looming o'er many a desert plain.

Around the shafts, the wild weeds climb,
And thick moss gathers in the lapse of time.
Arch after arch, and stone on stone,
Beneath a burning summer sun,

REFLECTIONS ON HISTORY

Or the beating wintry rain,
Fall, to strew the wreck-filled plain,
And the vast pile dissolves away,
Hour by hour, and day by day,
Like misty vapors of the air
Beneath the sun's meridian glare.

The fields, on which they fought and won
The grass and flowers have overgrown,
And woods, and spreading forests dense,
Smile in their green luxuriance,
As if the ashes of the dead,
And gallant blood, that there was shed,
Immingled in the green earth's breast,
Had waked a life that could not rest,
But rose, to strengthen every limb,
And rust'ling bough and fragile stem,
Thro' all that forest dense and dim.

Death is the common lot of all,
This transient world's material—
Stone, brass, and iron, own its sway,
Their time is only a longer day.
How vain is every effort of art,
And vain are the feelings of every heart.
Tho' the future seems like a cloudless sky
To the sunny mind of infancy,
With not a cloud to darken o'er
The flowery path that spreads before.
Yet, it asks no prophet of wondrous skill
The last and fatal end to tell.

REFLECTIONS ON HISTORY

In a narrow span of his mother earth,
In the bosom that reared and gave him birth,
The pilgrim sleeps, when the fitful scene
Of this world's trouble and strife have been,
And friends will weep him, and tears be shed,
On the lonely spot of his narrow bed,
For a little while, till grief grows less
In the lethean wave of forgetfulness.

And strangers turn a careless gaze
On the slendor stone, with its sculptored
trace,

Telling the name and time of death
Of him, or her, who sleeps beneath,
To those who neither know, nor care,
When they died, or who they were.

Till wind, and winter, and stormy weather,
Death, and fell decay, together,
Have crumbled away the very stone.

Then who is the mourner left?
For the last of his race is dead and gone,
And the latest tie is cleft
That links those mouldering ashes grey
To the cheerful world and the light of day.

Nations have risen and sunk away.
In the wreck of ages, where are they?
Where are their people, their gods and kings?
Gone like the rest of mortal things.
Fame, from the ruins, hath seized a part
Of the learning rich, and the classic art,

REFLECTIONS ON HISTORY

Which, reared by kindly culture, sprung
In earlier days when life was young,
And the river of Time hath borne them
down
From that far era to our own.

In Florence, the Phidian Venus stands,
And lives in marble, with drooping hands,
Which the chisels of artists now
Can borrow—alone—but not create.
Divinity sits on her low, white brow
And her profile delicate.
To her faultless form, each grace is given
That mortals can gain from a favoring
heaven,
Where Beauty and stone, in one magic tie,
Are linked till the gazer draws a sigh,
That the beautiful form he looks upon
Is only, alas! a lifeless stone.

The works of their poets still remain,
And a freshness breathes in every strain,
Till we scarce can think the heavy weight
Of a thousand weary years have sat
On the minstrels' grave, since first he sung
What, to the heart, must be ever young.

And still we hear the frequent name
Of him of Macedonian fame.
We hear the battles he fought and won,
And nations who, by him, were overthrown,

REFLECTIONS ON HISTORY

Till o'er happy tribes, who once were free,
He swept the rod of his tyranny,
Till all was conquered, all was gained,
And nothing more on earth remained,
When he, wistfully, turned toward the sun,
And wept because there was no world but
one.

But a future day will come at last,
When our age will be called the past,
When the antiquarian's feet shall tread
Over the ashes of our dead,
And science exert her magic might
Each mouldering relic to drag to light,
And Fame, with her impartial pen,
Shall write our story out for men.

O! ne'er may she tell that a nation, wide
Like ours, worthy her children's pride,
That has struggled long, and among the free
Is the altar and shrine of liberty,
Was overthrown by the fractious few,
A plundering wicked and pirate crew
Of traitor foes, who never knew
What it was for a human heart to feel
A throb of care for its country's weal,
Whose limbs are weary to press a throne,
Whose heads are aching to wear a crown,
And whose fingers have a nervous thrill
That a sceptre's touch alone can still,

REFLECTIONS ON HISTORY

Who could see each river's limpid flood
Dyed with the crimson hue of blood,
Or hear the mild and pure air rent,
To the very wall of the firmament,
With the widow's moans, or the orphan's
cries,
If horrors like these could make them rise.

No! rather let swift destruction sweep
O'er their hellish concoctions, dark and
deep.

Let them, and their actions, doubly be
Drowned in the tide of Infamy.
May the Fury's galling scourge be lent
To quicken their fearful punishment
With the pangs of Remorse, if ever they flee,
From mortal wrath, o'er the deep blue sea.
Let them find no peaceful, happy stage
In their long and weary pilgrimage,
Till they faint from dread, and loudly call
On overhanging mountains to fall,
And shield them, under their Atlas load,
From the wrath of their country, the world,
and God!

*Spoken at the "Junior Exhibition" at
Miami University, October 18, 1861*

Storming a City

AGAINST the tall gates' cupreous frame,
They point the cannon's jaw of flame.
Beneath, the balls went, rank on rank,
Down, and left a mighty blank.
So, from Etna's crater driven,
The rocks ascend against the heaven,
So, from out her mountain crest,
After ages past in rest,
Such a light pervades the air
That heaven itself reflects the glare,
And earth is rent with thunder there.
Thus, from the Christian army came
The storming shot and wreathing flame.
Huge clouds of heat and vapor rolled
And curled, in many a winding fold,
O'er Fortune's charmed and deathless band
And settled darkness wreathed the land.
Rock, bolt and bar are rent away
Before each swift projectile's sway.
Death and Destruction worked among
The Aztecs' mingled, motley throng,
The sword grew looser in their hands,
Yet one and all made stubborn stands.
They felt a fear, they knew not why;
It was not from a dread to die.
They thought they saw, before their eyes,
The subjects of the prophecies,

STORMING A CITY

That dim-dark race, whose feet would come
To drag the Aztec from his throne,
Whose cruel heart and withering hand
Should desolate their native land;
A pale-faced race, who could not die,
Who owned the gift of immortality,
Whose bloody hand, accurst, could wield
The elements the Volcan held
Beneath its fearful breast of rock,
The lightnings flash, the earthquakes shock,
Whose deadly arrow none could see,
Who sent a death that none might flee.
They saw that Destiny unfold,
As priests of former days foretold,
They felt they were called out to die,
Resisting dark Necessity;
Their nerveless fingers lost the art
Of sending the unerring dart—
Their hearts grew faint, their sight grew
dark,
Their wandering arrows missed their mark.

May, 1861

An Uncommonly Mournful Tale

ONCE, I, who tell this tale of rhyme,
Sat near my hearth, in winter-time,
While Old Jack Frost was holding sway,
And strove to while the hours away,
By reading, in a novel yellow,
How urchin Cupid shot a fellow,
And how this wounded chap walked through
More ills than most of persons do.
His love; she was a dashing sprite;
Perfection's self, revealed to sight
Love, Wit, and Beauty, all good things;
The author should have mentioned wings.

It was the old tale, ever new;
I did not read the volume through,
But I will wager full enough
Of brandy, gin, or meaner stuff,
To set the sturdiest bummer born,
In soaring bliss, from night till morn,
That, at its end (if it had any),
The two accomplished matrimony.

But I digress; my pen I took
To write no critic on a book,
But tell a tale; 'T was Winter drear,
The frost was keen, the sky was clear,
With snow the distant hills were white,
With recent ice the pond was tight,
And on that ice did skaters wheel,
In antic rounds, on shoes of steel.

AN UNCOMMONLY MOURNFUL TALE

Just then my comrade, Nobby, stood
Before my chair in rueful mood,
A look was on his honest phiz
That showed disaster had been his.
His well-drenched clothes were frozen hard,
They rattled stiff as Bristol card;
His hat was gone, his wet hair chill
Showed many a dangling icicle.
Jack Frost, with frozen mud and sleet,
Had made his armor all complete.
And thus, with many a plaint and wail,
He told his more than mournful tale.

“This morn, the ice that spans yon flood
Put me into a skating mood.
I took my Shirley’s, and, ere long,
I glided midst the frolic throng.
I did some feats not often done,
And admiration great I won.
Aloft in air I flung my leg,
And spun like top upon its peg;
Back circles, on one foot, I tried,
And whirled, and turned, and swayed in pride
Upon the crystal pane, with ease,
My skates wrote down their a b c’s,
And last, as record of my fame,
Upon the ice I traced my name.
I did it with such grace and skill
That all applauded with a will.
But scarce had ceased the rousing cheer
That greeted my delighted ear,

AN UNCOMMONLY MOURNFUL TALE

When lo! the ice, yet weak and thin,
Gave way beneath, and let me in.
Then did I flounder round, and dash
With many an awkward lunge and splash.
The cold bath took away my breath,
I felt not far remote from death.
I tried to crawl out, in vain,
Each time I slithered back again.
Bedaubed with mud, drenched through and
through,
My mind was puzzled what to do.
And worst of all, the blasted crowd
That late had cheered me long and loud,
Looked on, with many a jeer and grin,
As if rejoiced to see me in.
Some fellows there were hale and stout,
But lent no hand to help me out.
At last, an effort, stronger far
Than any of my others were,
Raised me from out my vile position
And put me in a safe condition.
Full quickly, I my skates untied,
Mid roaring laughs on every side.
Some beastly fool aloud did bawl:
'Pride always goes before a fall.'
'Stay,' said another senseless lout,
'Your mother does not know you're out.'
'He's damned good looking,' said a third,
Broad grinned, the blackguards as they
heard,

AN UNCOMMONLY MOURNFUL TALE

And every thief, the gang among,
Some taunt at my appearance flung.
Had I been only warm and dry,
I had not passed these insults by.
I would have showed them, very short,
That they were at unhealthy sport.
Wrath fired my soul; I choked it down,
I could not thrash them all, alone.
There are some men who are but beasts,
Devoid of manners are their breasts,
They need hindlegs and longer ears
To rig them for their proper spheres.
But, in my travels round the town,
I'll come across them, one by one,
And, by the Lord's especial blessing,
Each one I catch will get a dressing."

Then I replied, but not in rhyme,
I tuned the thing another time:
"The slippery ice appears to me
A type of man's prosperity.
The chilling waves that lurk below
Have semblance great to human woe.
A thin partition lies between
Man's highest bliss and sorrow keen,
And fickle Fortune, any day,
May rend the frail support away.
The men who jeered you, you will find
Like all the rest of human kind.

AN UNCOMMONLY MOURNFUL TALE

While blest by Influence, Wealth, and Fame,
They'll greet you with a full acclaim,
But if, in evil, you go down,
They'll let you struggle all alone.
Your very pangs, they will deride,
Rejoiced to see your towering pride
Meet with a check; he who depends,
In adverse hour, on former friends,
Will see them all desert him then;
He need not blame; they are but men
To raise the high to higher place,
The lowly, to still more abase.
So, since revolving time began,
Hath man done by his fellow-man.
Men are but men; so Heaven did make them,
And as we find them, we must take them."

Nob listened; in his calming breast
His wrathful feelings sank to rest.
He said he would his foes forgive,
And let them somewhat longer live.
Their insults now, but seemed to be
Signs only of humanity.
A compliment he paid to me,
Which was, yet was not, flattering.
He swore that I had full enough
Of just the very kind of stuff
Stowed in me, by the hand of Nature,
To make a most tremendous preacher.

Fairmount, January 15, 1868

Fragment

THE COMING OF TWILIGHT

'T is the evening's purple hour,
Now the sun begins to lower,
And his western course is bent
Steeply down the firmament.
The clouds, that Phœbus' warmth and light
Had lifted to their airy flight,
Of his beams deprived again,
Condensing, sink toward the plain,
And the twilight, cold and grey,
Comes, slowly creeping, on its way.
The peaks return the farewell glow,
The landscape slumbers dark below,
And over vale, and over hill,
As death, the heavy air grows still.
Nature, all voiceless seems, and dumb,
Save where is heard the myriad hum
Of insects in the shadows cool,
Winging above their parent pool.
From the shadowy treetops bright,
The owlet wings her nightly flight,
The moon comes up, the blush of day
Gives place to later evening's grey.

1858

Oxford

OF all the God-forsaken holes
My eyes have chanced to meet,
This classic region takes the horns
For dullness hard to beat.

Eternal silence reigns around
Through all the live-long year;
Those who are fond of quietude
Can surely find it here.

Sometimes a grunting hog appears,
Or thoughtful cow; perhaps a sheep;
And, but for these, all nature round
Would seem to be asleep.

The students are a selfish set,
Virtuous, tame, and slow;
Smooth, on the straight and narrow path,
With stolid step, they go.

The ladies are confined, by rule,
Like convicts in a cell,
Taught to avoid a gay young man,
As though he came from hell.

O! for an amour rich and rare!
I've had some two or three of such;
But e'en to hope for such a thing
In Oxford, is too much.

OXFORD

The faculty are worthy men,
And well they tend their classes;
They are as shepherds to the sheep,
And drivers to the asses.

The muses whisper in my ear,
(The nine sweet, charming lasses),
They hardly will select this spot
To build a new Parnassus.

Oxford, October 20, 1861

American Patriotism

THERE is a land the patriot loves—
It is his native home;
He loves its streams and rocks and groves
Nor will he from them roam.
All that can make existence dear,
All that he loves on earth, is here.

And when Invasion's thunders sound,
And War's wild tempests gather round,
He'll strive his land to save.
He'll rush, all dauntless, on the foe,
Though in his face their bayonets glow,
And he will conquer them. Although
The hissing bullet lays him low,
And hurls him to the grave,
He will esteem it sweet to be
A martyr, slain for Liberty.

Such are the sons of our soil,
Since first they stood on Plymouth rock
For, from the rage of Britain's isle,
They've stood full many a battle shock,
And should the foe come on again,
The valor of the free
Will render all their fury vain,
Against the shrine of Liberty.

AMERICAN PATRIOTISM

For here, the Goddess lights her flame
Upon Columbia's shore,
And bids its lustre burn the same
Till Time shall be no more.
And may the traitor, who would dare
To quench its holy light,
Meet all the ills that Hell can spare!
May shame fill up his dreadful share,
And friends, his parted spirit, bear
To everlasting night!

Cincinnati, 1853

Epigram

THEY who delight in Opposition
are like weather cocks (wind
mills), always facing the gale.

Pirithous Transfixed

Scene I: The Entrance to the Infernal Kingdom

PIRITHUOS

THE air grows dark, the thundering roar
Of Phlegethon falls on my ears,
Terrific, horrible; the folding gates
Stand high aloft, with brazen bars
Impassable to human strength.
Far, far behind, our native air
And Grecian climate we have left.
Now, at creation's utter bounds,
Shuddering, we view the dark abyss
That mars the Acherontian fields.
I hear the roar of waters near,
And clank of many links of chains.
Say, Theseus, dost thou feel afraid?

THESEUS

Not I; this darkness hath a charm
To changeful natures, such as mine,
Ever in quest of new adventure,
Though it may come in danger's form.

PIRITHUOS

Full soon enough will danger come,
For, by the immortal gods, who rule
Events that happen in the world of light,
The wife of Pluto shall be mine.

PIRITHUOS TRANSLATED

Not for a frolic, have I come so far,
To trace the rugged, rocky road to hell.
But for a deed, at which the cheeks
Of mortals might grow dim and pale;
And cold, the life stream curdle on their hearts.
Say, Theseus! for thou art my friend,
Say! will this fiery ordeal touch thy heart,
To make thee fly from me, perchance,
If hell's grim monarch should oppose?

THESEUS

No! by yon flood, accursed, that shines
With glimmering, baleful light, afar
Through the brass gates, I trebly swear,
Should hell arise in sevenfold rage,
To spurn the weak invaders from her soil,
Her thousand horrors will not fright
My spirit to desert my friend.
O! when far ages speak my name,
Let not the tongue of man aver
That, from the cradle to the grave,
Fear ever seized the heart of Theseus.

PIRITHUOS

The darkness grows, the gloomy way
Appears precipitous, thro' shrouds of mist,
Whence, glimmering, piercing rays of light
Gleam from the fiery depths of Phlegethon.
The gates themselves, reflecting light,
Glow like the redhot iron bars

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

Of living furnaces; meanwhile the smith
Urges the fiery rage with rapid blasts.
What grizzly porter by the lintel stands!
O horrid shape! terrific to behold.
Alas! Alas!

THESEUS

O! light of heaven,
Protect thy children now; this hideous form
Might turn the gazer into stone.

PIRITHUOS

I will not fear, tho' it should nail
My figure, spellbound, to the rocks,
Changed into flint, thro' speechless horror.

THESEUS

O Gods! avert this woeful sight!
E'en now my heart begins to fail.

PIRITHUOS

I'd sooner see thy members rent
And scattered piecemeal, than behold
Thee, my best friend, inglorious, fly.
Urge up thy strength, a warrior's soul
Is measured not by want of fear,
But by his power of conquering it.
But the huge gates are now at hand,
I will lead on, but follow close,

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

With careful footsteps, in my trail,
Lest the dim, wavering light mislead.

THESEUS

Look! Look! Pirithuos, at the bars
The grinning monster stands; a treble head,
Dog shaped and foul, surmounts his frame.
Fly back! his evil eyes behold, his jaws,
With teeth white glistening in the light,
Chatter with rage. O horrid death!
What if he draws the iron bolt
And rushes forth!

PIRITHUOS

Our tempered swords,
Our bows, and brass-bound shields,
Are constant friends, and when they fail
All heaven can not avail to save.

THESEUS

Madness alike, to fight or fly,
Yon fiend hath sword and shield
As well as we, and horrid fangs,
Speed in pursuit, and cruelty,
And all capacities for death.
O! had I thought the land of hell
Gave birth to monsters such as these,
I never would have left my home.

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

PIRITHUOS

I question not thy bravery of soul,
For thy case is not like to mine.
While simple Friendship leads thee on,
Love and Revenge, my motives are.
I owe no love gifts to the king
Of this dark region, while my father hangs
Bound to the circle of a rapid wheel,
His brain, all dazzled by deluding stars,
Flashes of light, and seven hued forms,
Bred from the swift and dizzying whirl.
I tell thee, Theseus, that I would not fear
To send an arrow thro' the heart
Of Hell's foul tyrant, but the queen,
Too lovely for so vile a lord, I swear
To carry to the upper world of light;
The Lapathae shall call her queen.
Come on, approach these solid gates!

CERBERUS

Whom do I see, both bearing shields,
Swords and strong bows, and clad
Complete in garments of the upper world?
Say wretches, in what luckless track
Do your foul, impious footsteps tend?

THESEUS

Unbar the gates; we come to bring
A weighty message to the king!

PIRITHUOS TRANSMITED

CERBERUS

Nothing of flesh and blood has past
This threshold since my watch began;
Nothing but shadowy forms of air,
Thin and delusive, have gone in,
And, having gone, returned no more.

PIRITHUOS

But we shall go, and shall again return.

CERBERUS

Thou goest, then, above my corse.

PIRITHUOS

Fate may ordain the thing e'en so.

CERBERUS

Thou hast a flattering view of Fate,
For Fate ordains the thing, Not so,
But THUS; much low-born insolence
May rankle in my mind, until
I draw the bolt; in good truth, then,
Thou shalt come in, for I, enraged,
Shall smite thee unto death, and send
Thy soul, deprived of corporeality,
Into the gates, never to return.

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

PIRITHUOS

Thou art a pretty sentinel, to stand
And block a foreign legate's way,
Who bears a message to your king.

CERBERUS

From what far kingdom do you come?

PIRITHUOS

We own the sovereignty of Jove,
The son of Saturn, he who rules
The course of Nature, by his law
Inflexible. The smiling Spring,
The soft, green Summer, and the Fall,
When the brown leaves drop off
At every changing blast that blows,
And the sad Winter, solstice of the year,
When the dim day star casts his rays
Slanting and cold, and sleety snow
Shrouds the deserted breast of Earth,
Come, and depart, as he commands,
And act out his divine decree.

CERBERUS

Thou speakest things I know not of;
I've heard of Spring, of Summer, Winter, Fall
But no such changes happen here.
Here, one perpetual, blustering season reigns,
Hot as the desert waste of Lybia,
Frequent in whirlwinds and in storms.

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

THESEUS

We did not speak to you of Jove
And seasons over which he rules,
Only, that thou mayest know, perchance
To what divinity we bow, and hence,
That thou mayest give to us
A speedy passage and a safe return;
The privilege, which nations owe
To legates to a foreign land.

CERBERUS

Jove hath no need of aught with us,
Nor we of him; this broad domain
Sends no ambassadors to upper air,
Nor shall 't receive one. Here below,
We hold an independent monarchy,
Nor would we anything with Jove.

PIRITHUOS

The gates are closed against us, then?

CERBERUS

They are.

PIRITHUOS

Not thus I will depart,
After long toil so far; Unbar the gate
I say, or, by the god, I swear,
The infernal Pluto, I will pierce
Your malformed figure with a dart!

PIRITHUOS TRANSLATED

CERBERUS

Well then, come in! (*opens the gate*) I've
thought
'T were just as well; to let you pass
Within the gate is in my power.
Now, bear your message and, again,
When you return, let Pluto send
A trusty guide to bid me let you pass,
Else you may meet an evil end. (*they enter*)

Scene II: The Palace of Pluto. Proserpina

PIRITHUOS

Now have we past the gate,
The grizzly porter, and the waves
Of stagnant Styx, and Charon's boat
Hath landed us not distant far
From the black palace of the king.
Lo! yonder spire, whose glimmering top
Shoots, sparkling, to the infernal sky,
Red with effulgence, not of earth.
No weary pilgrimage awaits our feet,
The terminus is close at hand.

THESEUS

The sight of these gigantic walls,
Immeasurable and vast, disarm
My spirit of its strength again.

PITITHUOS TRANSLATED

The naked grandeur of the pile,
Whose every column would support
The load of Atlas, well declare
The might of their great architect.
Ah me! a dim presentiment
Tells me, this threshold, and this gate,
Our footsteps never will recross;
This place will be our tomb.

PIRITHUOS

Well let it be, not even Earth,
Our mighty mother, could afford,
On all the regions of her breast,
From the cold Hyperborean tract,
Lit by the Arctic and the Bear,
To the soft plains of Sicily,
Green with eternal Spring,
To grant a nobler sepulcher.
But now, within the vestibule
We stand, but here she comes,
The wife of the Tartarian king.

THESEUS

Is this indeed Proserpina,
Whose beauty thou hast lauded so?

PIRITHUOS

It is, be still!

PROSERPINA

Whom do I see?

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

PIRITHUOS

Hail! queen of Tartarus; for such
Your royal looks declare you are;
Thou see'st thy servant Pirith'os,
And this, his comrade, Theseus.
We come to this terrific land
To bear Jove's greeting to your lord.

PROSERPINA

He is not here, but soon will be;
A hasty messenger can go
And bring him hither presently.

PIRITHUOS

Impose no trouble on thyself.
There is no need of haste, for we
Can tarry till your husband come.

PROSERPINA

But what can be your message here?

PIRITHUOS

'T is a command from mighty Jove,
But, as thou art thyself concerned
In its full consummation, much
'T is fit that thou should'st know.
'T is this, Jove sends command
To gloomy Pluto, to release
His stolen bride, and send her back
To breathe again in upper air.

PIRITHOOS TRANSFIXED

PROSERPINA

My will is with you, and, in truth,
Not sorrowing, I will depart
From this dark place; I'd rather
Be a poor shepherd girl on earth,
And pass my life in poverty,
Than be the queen I am. I came
Not hither by my own consent.

THESEUS

The legends of my native land,
That earth was thy first biding-place,
Have taught me long ago.

PROSERPINA

Jove was my father, and my mother Ceres
I grew to lovely womanhood
Amid the groves of Arcady.
But, once, when in my sixteenth year,
I wandered by a rippling stream,
In the fair, fruitful month of May,
A grim and hideous form approached,
Accosting me with words of love,
And, with soft flattery, compared
My beauty to the flowers around,
While I repulsed his blandishments.
But scorn seemed only to inflame
His luckless passion. Filled with rage,
He next tried force, and, not in vain,

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

He ravished me, and brought me down
To this dim, shadowy land to dwell.
He calls me wife, and every day
I feign a love I can not feel,
Lest his fierce, frantic jealousy
Should make my fate more terrible.
Ah me! would that my eyes
Might see my native Arcady again!

PIRITHUOS

And thou shalt see it, but allow
Me and my friend to guide,
And we shall lead you to the land
Over which Jove, in justice, reigns.

PROSERPINA

I give consent, I go, even now,
But move with haste; ere long
The loathsome monster will return.
Take this straight path. Alas! I fear
Much for our fortunes, if, perchance,
He thwarts our desperate design.
But fail not, for the lack of speed!

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

Scene III: Pluto and Cerberus Waiting; Pluto concealed

THESEUS

Well, thou black monster, we have come,
Nor have we waited long.
Draw back and let us pass,
Why standest thou so still!

CERBERUS

Hath Pluto sent a guide with thee?

THESEUS

A guide! what meanest thou, declare?
Thou see'st the queen.

CERBERUS

I see no guide.

PIRITHUOS

The queen comes as a guide herself,
So draw thy swarthy carcass black,
And let the path be clear!

THESEUS

Say, wretch! hath not a queen the power
To make her subjects ope the gates
Of her dominions!

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

CERBERUS

This one here
Can answer that most readily.

PLUTO (*Coming from Concealment*)

Not if the king says no.

PROSERPINA

Alas!
O heaven above! all, all is lost!

PIRITHUOS

Quick, Theseus! lend your aid, she faints

PLUTO

Reserve thy aid for thy own need,
But, as to her, there let her lie.
Here, Cerberus; in tenfold chains,
Wrap these two villain men,
Disarmed completely, let them be,
Unable to resist. When I have heard
Their stories, I will deal with them
In such a manner as is fit.
They'll find, I fear, no lenient judge.
Your names?

THESEUS

Pirithuos and Theseus.

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

PLUTO

Speak shortly what you have to say!
If aught there be that justifies
Thy trespass, I will weigh it well.
If not, prepare for hideous woe.
From what clime are ye come?

THESEUS

From fruitful Arcady.

PLUTO

Both, then, are Greeks.
She came from Arcady in Greece.
It is no use, the game is up.
I doubted of the seeming love—
It seemed too much like policy.
I thought a lingering desire
To view once more her native land,
Rested upon her heart, but thou—
Art thou her lover? Speak!—
Thy silence answers yes, I know
What dastard motive brought you here,
As well as if it were confessed.

PIRITHUOS

Trust not in guessings, plainly, now—
I give my narrative in simple style.
Jove sends us hither, to bring back
The fair Proserpina to Earth.
Our errand unto her we told.

PIRITHUOS TRANSLATED

But when she saw us mortal men,
In mortal garments, it brought back
The land of light to memory,
The happy hours of her early youth;
When, in sweet Arcady, the fair,
She led the sheep to pastures green,
Or wandered by the murmuring brooks,
Her days were peaceful as her clime,
Her eyes alone accustomed to
The melting azure of the Summer sky,
And birds and flowers, and verdant hills,
Her ears trained to the shepherds' lute
And Nature's ceaseless melody.
And, with that dim, dark memory
Of childish sports and happiness,
Came a strong, yearning wish
To view that blessed clime again—
The cradle of her infancy.
Thou knowest that a mortal heart,
Lit by a spark of true humanity,
Never forgets its native land.

PLUTO

I know the mortal heart is hard,
Perverse, and fractious, and I know
Its strong proclivity to lie.

THESEUS

The story he has told is true.
She had no thought of wronging thee,

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

But Jove's strong summons moved her on
At memory of her native land.

PLUTO

Thy story hath a smack of truth—
'T is plausible at least, and, thus,
Thou hast exonerated her from blame,
But hardly hast thou cleared thyself.

THESEUS

Are we to blame?

PLUTO

Indeed, why not?

THESEUS

We came to bear Jove's embassy.

PLUTO

Jove's embassy shall have, in truth,
No hasty answer; let him wait.
But now that I have heard, at last,
The story of your luckless raid, prepare
To suffer terrible revenge.
You thought your pretty stories of
Arcadian fields and purling streams,
Birds, azure skies, and flowery groves,
Perchance, might soften down my heart.
Now learn, at last, your error great.

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

Here, Cerberus, seize PIRITHUOS,
And trebly bind him in unyielding chains!
A fitting morsel, he shall be,
When Hunger, next, with cruel pangs,
Urges thy jaws to violence.

PIRITHUOS

Alas!
Our bows, our bows are left behind.

PLUTO

Had'st thou a bow?

PIRITHUOS

In truth I had;
A sturdy bow, which none
With arms effeminate might bend.

PLUTO

Thou grieveſt at its loss?

PIRITHUOS

And if I do,
Thou mayest rejoice, for to its loss
Thou owest thy security.

PLUTO

By Styx!
Thy talk is fierce; on earth,
Dull mortals might pronounce thee brave.

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

But I am greatly at a loss,
In finding, whether in your brain
Insanity or fury most presides.
But thou, swarthy visaged brute, (*to Cerb.*)
Why do I see these free from chains!
Some moments back, I ordered you
To link them trebly, in unyielding bonds.
Late as it is, obey my order!

CERBERUS (*seizing Pirithuos*)

Now, where are all your mighty threats?
Now, pierce my malformed figure with a dart!
Death comes to every mortal man;
Before long, he will come to you.
Act not unhandsome, you are safe.
You need not wear your muscles out—
You might, as sensibly, attempt
To burst a tenfold chain of iron,
As free thyself from my stern grasp.

PLUTO

Bind him securely; stay!
I'll lend a hand, and link
These clasping nippers to his wrists.

CERBERUS

Now he is safe, his legs are tied,
Fast to each other, with a cord;
And he is handcuffed, and his arms,
A galling chain, behind his back,

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

Firmly retains, and winding round
His figure, with its brazen rings,
Bears its metallic pressure on his chest.

PLUTO

His limbs are useless; I would think
He was reduced to helplessness,
But that appearances so oft mislead.
Legs, arms, and neck, and head are safe,
But such men have more legs than two—
And arms, and double heads, have they,
By which they always find a mode
To free themselves from every ill.

CERBERUS

We have secured him full as well
As it lay in our power to do.
If he can free himself, he ought,
For if he hath that much of skill,
He well deserves his liberty.

PLUTO

Now chain him to this brazen bar!

CERBERUS

The act is done, at last; what next?

PLUTO

But I must hasten to the palace now,
The queen seems waking from her trance.

PIRITHUOS TRANSLATED

PROSERPINA

O, heaven! is this some painful dream,
Or dread reality: O! where am I?
Am I on earth, in lovely Arcady,
Or still in gloomy Tartarus below?

PLUTO

This hardly can be called a dream,
But as to where thou art—
Whether at home in Arcady
Or Tartarus, look round thee well.
Does yonder sunless cavern dim,
The doleful sky, the unlovely plains,
Have aught, in look, of Arcady?

PROSERPINA

Ah no! O! unrelenting Fates! alas!
Why have you wrought for me
A texture, web on web, with woes?
O! Jove, supreme!

PLUTO

Call not on Jove!
Jove rules in heaven, but here
I am sole monarch and supreme.

PROSERPINA

But where are his ambassadors?

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

PLUTO

Yonder they are, one trebly bound,
And fastened, firmly, every limb,
Doomed, by irrevocable Fate, to be
A supper to yon ruthless fiend;
The other one, as yet, is free.

PROSERPINA

O! merciless and cruel lord!
What is there that I may not fear?

PLUTO

Fear nothing, for their stupid tale
Acquitted thee from every blame,
Save that of verdancy, but well I know
Most women are not hurt with sense.
I do forgive thee, and not much
I wonder, that thou should'st believe
That Jove sent these marauders down.

CERBERUS

The sight of mortal, living, man
In this dark kingdom, is a sight
So strange and marvelous, that one,
Having beheld it, would be credulous.
I half believed, myself, that Jove
Had sent them hither, for they seemed
To be so confidant, and so strange withal,
I doubted that weak-minded men

PIRITHUOS TRANSLATED

Could come so far and not depend
On something stronger than themselves.

PLUTO

Let us depart, we tarry long—
Our palace waits us. Free thyself
From nerveless stupor and arise! (*she rises*)
Cerberus, we go, that other wretch—
That Theseus—bind in brazen links,
The same as his companion is,
And place him in the glimmering depth
Of that dark cave, and let Pirithuos
Live till I come, for I may change
His sentence, for his crime deserves
Something more terrible than death!
Watch them, like Argus, with a thousand eyes!
(*Exit Pluto*).

Scene IV

CERBERUS

Thou art soon back.

PLUTO

I've well considered
The crimes of these two men, alone,
In solitude, and coolness, and now,
Can give a sentence, justly, free
From every bias; and not more

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

Of justice could they have, altho'
Before the tribunal of Jove himself.

(To Pirithuos and Theseus)

This is your sentence; you shall stand,
Mounted in air, upon this rugged cliff
Thro' all eternity. The chilling air
Of Autumn, and the biting blast
Of Wintry snow storms, and the sky,
With its cold tears of sympathy,
Shall soften down your foward hearts.

(To the Furies)

Come hither, fatal sisters, and amuse
Their sinking spirits with a strain!

SONG OF THE FURIES

May the charms of gentle sleep
Far from cursed marauders keep!
Let these wretches, day by day,
Wither, and sigh, and pine away!
Let the wet clouds from the main
Lash them with descending rain,
And hail, and drifting sleet
On their forms, defenseless, beat!
Let them mourn, and let them sigh,
Let them suffer, but not die!
May their fair complexion's bloom
Long precede them to the tomb;

PIRITHUOS TRANSFIXED

Burning suns, and arid blasts,
Hot across the desert wastes,
Bleach their gloomy locks to grey
Long before the proper day!
Let them grieve, with weeping eye,
O'er their distant Arcady!
Let them weep, for tears are vain,
They fall, as futile as the rain!
Ne'er shall they behold, again,
Home, or friends, or native land,
Scenes of childhood, or of youth,
Now reproduced, by Memory's wand,
With vividness and truth.
Such memories can gall the heart
Until they seem to grow a part
Of our own deep vitality,
A cankerworm that can not die.

To Carrie S—

IF there's, in all the world, a lass
That I would wish to marry,
To have forever by my side,
It is the charming Carrie.

When she appears upon the stage,
She's winsome as a fairy.
No girl in all the ballet troupe
Can be compared with Carrie.

Love darted from her soft brown eyes
The shafts I could not parry.
Her witching smile has won my heart,
I am the slave of Carrie.

And not for all the gold that glows
In Indian caverns dreary,
Would I exchange my place within
The gentle heart of Carrie.

If I were placed in heaven above,
E'en there I could not tarry,
Unless I still might have the sweet
Companionship of Carrie.

To a Noisy Weather Gage and Wheel

You restless, never idle, mill—
You might, at dawn at least, be still.
Your buzzing clatter, sharp and shrill,
 Disturbs my rest,
And brings me to a world of ills,
 From visions blest.

You taxed my utmost skill and art,
To make, and fit you, every part.
With pride, I saw your motion start
 Before the airs—
But now I wish, with all my heart,
 I'd been at prayers.

The swallow, once, constructed here
Her nest, and did her children rear.
Thy furious discord filled, with fear,
 Their little hearts.
Now, to some spot, from danger clear,
 The throng departs.

On yester eve, at set of sun,
An urchin came this way, alone,
Who hurled at you a large-sized stone;
 Wrath fired his eye,
I looked to see your fragments strown,
 It went so nigh.

TO A NOISY WEATHER GAGE AND WHEEL

But had his hand the missile sent,
With aim as good as his intent,
Into a thousand atoms rent,
 Your pieces would
Some aid, unto the cook, have lent,
 As kindling good.

I wish the stone had chanced to go
More to the left, an inch or so.
It would have silenced, at a blow,
 Your noisy strains,
And might, of hauling you below,
 Spared me the pains.

It is not fit, your idle play
Should fright the timid birds away.
You are more useless far than they,
 Less fair to view.
If either of you here must stay,
 It can't be you.

I'd let you bide your time, if I
Thought any tempest's fury, high,
Would overset you, by and by.
 But you're too tough,
And scorn the powers of the sky,
 However rough.

TO A NOISY WEATHER GAGE AND WHEEL

You are of stubborn hick'ry made,
Well joined together, screwed and stayed.
Who waits thy fall, I am afraid,
 Will, ere that day,
Perceive his youthful locks to fade
 In silvery grey.

Now, blustering March comes on, and high
The blasts from every quarter fly.
For sake of morning slumbers, I
 Must close your song.
I'll take you down, and you shall lie
 The rubbish 'mong.

But as the veriest wretch, whose ear
Did e'er his final sentence hear,
Has still, at least, a moment clear,
 Wherein to show
Why he should 'scape his doom severe,
 I'll treat you so.

If you have any reasons true,
Why this should not be done to you,
Present them plainly to my view
 In brief narration,
And I will give them all their due
 Consideration.

TO A NOISY WEATHER GAGE AND WHEEL

REPLY

Well, I will tell my simple tale,
And all I ask, if it prevail,
Is that I freely in the gale
 May sing and turn;
But make me fire wood if I fail,
 And let me burn.

I have one virtue, you will find,
But seldom seen in human kind.
While candor never warms their mind,
 All truth am I.
I give no false reports, to blind,
 And scorn to lie.

Upon this single merit's weight,
You ought to save me from the fate
Of lumber room and kitchen grate;
 For, ere you die,
Truth you will learn to estimate
 At value high.

There is no man, within whose breast
A love of nature e'er was placed,
With noble philosophic taste,
 Who can not see,
As I hang whirling in the blast,
 A charm in me.

To a Noisy Weather Gage and Wheel

Sometimes, towards the South I face,
And spin around, in rapid race,
Whereby a coming rain you'll trace.

Though skies are clear,
The smiling blue will soon give place
To hues more drear.

Oft, in some dismal, murky spell,
When rains have, days together, fell,
You, rueful, look for me to tell

How long 'twill last.

If to the North I point, 't is well,
Your fears are past.

For, though the gloomy West may seem
With hosts of stormy clouds to teem,
Full well you know, the morrow's gleam

Shall brightly play
On hill and forest, vale and stream,
With tintings gay.

When to the South I turn, you know
You, safely, may your tackle throw
Upon the glad waves' gentle flow.

The dwellers there
Will throng around your bait, below,
Nor heed the snare.

TO A NOISY WEATHER GAGE AND WHEEL

When Northward does my index stand,
You keep yourself at home on land.
No lines or rods, then, arm your hand.

The fish won't bite,
But, downward diving, seek the sand,
And pebbles white.

I wake you up at dawn, you say.
You're wroth at this, but tell me, pray,
Who sleeps beyond the break of day,
Except the lazy?
Your wits, if you keep on that way,
Will soon grow hazy.

If you were either good or wise,
You'd look upon me as a prize,
And be content, at morn, to rise
At my alarms,
To see Aurora deck the skies
With countless charms.

Then gayly shines the dew upon
The grass tips of the sparkling lawn,
And, on the hill-top, beams the sun
With golden ray;
The fields awake to hail the dawn
With joyful lay.

TO A NOISY WEATHER GAGE AND WHEEL

The mists, around the summits curled,
By Sol's warm beams, are upward whirled
His burning fires awake the world,
With floods of light.

Grim Darkness, from his throne, is hurled,
And takes his flight.

Who would prefer his downy bed,
When scenes like this around him spread,
With light and music overhead?

Hard is his breast,
His soul, to beauty, must be dead,
And strange his taste.

You'll please yourself, to take me down,
But it will be yourself alone.
Aggrieved, the neighbors, every one,
Will mourn my fate,
And sadly feel, when I am gone,
Their loss how great.

The schoolboys, in their homeward way,
As, near the spot, their footsteps stray,
Stand mute, and watch my circling play.

In my high station,
I am the wonder (so they say),
Of all creation.

TO A NOISY WEATHER GAGE AND WHEEL

Music may in my voice be found,
Methinks my rattling, merry sound
Relieves the loneliness around,
 Of wood and hill,
Whose solitude were too profound
 If I stood still.

And now, my honored master dear,
Must this day close my glad career?
Must I, in ashes, disappear
 To boil a pot,
Or, mouldering in the woodhouse drear,
 Be all forgot?

Mount me in some location, where
The gentle birds I will not scare,
Where constant breezes sweep the air,
 And let me hum!
Inaction's what I can not bear,
 And silence dumb.

Song

THE Spring time is coming
 In beauty and bloom;
The Winter has fled,
 With its frost and its gloom.
Thro' emerald meadows
 The daisies are bright,
And the swift-rushing streamlet
 Is flashing in light.

Then come to the arbor,
 My own blushing fair,
Where nature is breathing
 Soft incense in air.
She is decking the valley
 With green garlands fair.
Come and see how its beauty
 With thine will compare.

We'll walk in the silence
 And shade of the grove;
The city's wild turmoil
 Is fatal to love.
Farewell to thy chamber,
 Why dwell in its gloom?
The Springtime is coming
 With beauty and bloom.

Cincinnati, May 4, 1855

Lines

THOUGH I may roam a foreign shore
 Beyond the azure sea,
My early home, at evening time,
 I will remember thee!
Perhaps my dreary lot is cast
 Near to the frozen pole,
Where hoarsely howls the wintry blast,
 And cold the billows roll.
The burning sands, my feet may tread,
 And torrid suns may scorch my brow;
Or, I may stand on Etna's head
 Of everlasting snow.
A southern clime may meet these eyes,
 With softer stars and milder skies,
 And green savannahs fair;
And maids, whose beauty, in its prime,
 Shall put to shame their starry clime,
 May, from my breast, expel despair,
 And wake a lovelier feeling there.

These scenes shall be, ere cheerless age
 Shall darken round my pilgrimage.
My feet are destined yet to go
 Thro' many a path of joy or woe.
I knew so, in my early years,
 I think so still, in smiles and tears.
Enough! wherever I may be,
 In fortune or adversity,

FRAGMENT

On desert sand, or Alpine snow,
Or where soft Indian breezes blow,
Still, memory shall turn her eye
Back to the home of Infancy.

1858

Fragment

LOSS OF THOR'S HAMMER

THOR raised his hammer, with intent
Of giving signal punishment.
Warned by his eyeball's burning glow,
Utgarda Loki dodged the blow,
And the swift missile, hissing, went,
Like lightning, through the firmament.
Thor looked once more, that look was vain
Before him, spread the vacant plain,
Where not a single sign was seen,
Of where the city late had been.
Utgarda Loki passed from sight,
And vanished like the mists of night.

186

Lines

LEAFLET, thou art dying now,
Cold the winds of Autumn blow
Round thy fragile stem.

Colder, yet, the winds will be,
Stronger blasts will rustle thee,
From skies more dark and dim.

Soon, from off thy native bough,
Lifeless, thou shalt sail below
To the wintry ground.

Where once the summer, soft and green,
Gently beautified the scene,
And Zephyr breathed a mournful sound

Icy winds, with rapid sweeps,
Pile the snow, in drifting heaps,
All desolate around.

Such as thine, shall be the fate
Of him who mourns thee, soon or late,
Age and dull decay,

Hastening on life's glowing prime,
Till, from off the branch of time,
He shall drop away.

LINES

Thou shalt die, and, darkly rolled,
Perish, in the silent mold,
In eternal sleep.

He may his hereafter know,
Softer skies for him may glow
In a kindlier sphere.

In the blue depth of boundless space,
Heaven may have a dwelling-place,
A land without a tear,

Where love and friendship both are true
Where none may disappointment rue,
Where all we sigh for here
May be found.

Arctic

WHO so joyous were at the break of day,
Ask of the winds that so gently moan
Above the waves with mournful tone,
Ask of their monarch, can he tell
Whether they be in heaven or hell?
That heavy question ne'er will be
Solved by mortal scrutiny.
But silver planet, thou who guides,
From shore to shore, the rolling tides,
Let thy waters sweep their bodies o'er,
And bear them near to their native shore.
They have gone to coral reefs, there to sleep
Fast in the arms of their gloomy deep.
They sunk to their rest, without a knell
Rung at their wat'ry funeral,
But the deeply heaving and groaning surge
Shall be their everlasting dirge.
But yet, they have a restless pillow
Cradled by the tossing billow.
They have no light to disperse the gloom
That curtains around their ocean tomb.
Hushed, at their homes, around the hearth,
Is now the joyous laugh of mirth.
The laugh of pleasure is now o'er,
And the humorous jest is heard no more.
But they are gone to a fairer sphere,
Freed from the cares that perplex us here.

ARCTIC

The few survivors on the raft,
Perchance, the winds to shore may waft
For three long days, upon the seas,
They sailed before contrary breeze.
Each day, the quick-revolving sun
Saw them sinking, one by one,
By famine and by thirst opprest,
To their last eternal rest.
That frail craft not many bore
Safely to their native shore,
And few escaped the common fate
Their dreadful story to relate.

1855

Cosroes and the Three Sages

IN days of old, when Cosroes' hand
The sceptre held in Persia's land,
The monarch summoned, to his throne,
Three sages, wide for wisdom known,
And bid them, then and there, to tell
The state of man, most miserable.

Then answered one: "It seems to me,
Old age, combined with poverty,
Gives all the full excess of woe
That man can suffer here below."

Then said the other: "To my mind,
The fate of him seems more unkind,
Who, by disease's pangs distressed,
Longs for the grave's eternal rest;
Whose weary days are full of woe,
Whose eyes no nightly slumbers know."

The third one spoke: "For him, I sigh,
Who bears the scourge of Destiny,
Whom cold Misfortune follows fast,
And shipwrecks with her bitter blast;
Whose hopes have all been rendered vain
By ills on ills, a deadly train,
Till zeal, and strength, and courage gone,
Dark Misery's vortex draws him down."

COSROES AND THE THREE SAGES

Then answered Persia's Grand Vizier,
Revered in peace, renowned in war:
"These ills are weary, to endure,
'T is cheerless to be old and poor,
And, for his sake, I shed a tear,
Who groans in agony severe.
Nor can I see, with eyelids dry,
The ruined child of destiny;
His broken heart, and weary state,
Are mournful things to contemplate.
But, sad as all these evils are,
I know of one more hopeless far.

It is the fate of him, who hath,
Through life, pursued the evil path,
Whose hands no pious act have done,
Whose works are wickedness alone,
Till cruel Death, with aspect grim,
All unexpected, meets with him,
And drags him, from a life of ill,
Before that awful tribunal,
To render his account to Him
Whose final judgment is supreme."

May, 1868

The Battle of Blue Licks

MANY a year has passed and gone,
Since that sad and fatal dawn—
 Yet memory, with reverted eyes,
 Sees the battle fought again,
 And the green rock's native dyes
 Spoiled by slaughter's crimson rain.

O tranquil Licking! did you dream,
 On the morning of the fray,
When your silver-winding stream
 Like a glassy mirror lay,
 That, before the summer sun
 His journey thro' the sky had done,
 And his last departing beam
 Had gilt thy forest and thy stream,
 Thy waves, so clear and blue,
Now glistening far and wide,
 Would take a deadlier light and hue,
A red and swollen tide?

Here, by this stone, so greenly mossed,
McGary, to the battle crost,
And upward, to the fatal plain,
Led on the brave and warlike train.
Alas! how few again returned,
Whose hearts, with valor, in them burned
Who little recked or thought that they
Would ever be the wild hawk's prey?

THE BATTLE OF BLUE LICKS

How many ever called to mind
The homes, so lately left behind,
With thoughts of a foreboding kind?
For, tho' their brown hands waved adieu
While yet their cabins stood in view,
How could they think, as on they past,
How long that farewell was to last?

In yonder thicket's banks of shade,
Flashes of ceaseless lightning played,
As, on the Autumn's smiling plain,
Thick falls the rows of yellow grain
Beneath the reaper's sway;
As mists that cloud the morning air,
Beneath the sun's ascending glare
Melt silently away,
So thick and fast they fell;
And, high above the clanging blows,
As bravest heroes fell, arose
The frightful, savage yell.

The slain are slumbering 'neath my feet,
Their bones are moldering below;
No tomb the pilgrim's eye can meet,
No urn contains their ashes now.

The Summer morning paints the earth,
And gilds the winding wave,
But morning never comes to cheer
The tenants of the grave—

THE BATTLE OF BLUE LICKS

Those who have left the stage of time,
While acting in a part sublime.
For them, the lyre of Fame is strung,
Their deeds in later days are sung.
The child of Freedom, as he treads
The ground above their narrow beds,
Shall pause to think of former days,
Of those who fought for fame or praise.
Ambition cast their honor down
And pointed to a distant throne.
For this alone, their people bled,
Their fields were covered with the dead.
When all was conquered, all was gained,
And nothing more on earth remained,
Their wistful eyes pursued the sun,
And wept, there was no world but one.
More sacred were the deeds of these
Whose homes were mid the forest trees.

But tho' those homes were humble things,
Not mod'led to the pride of kings,
To them, there was no place more fair,
For all affections centered there.
The magnet, placed in southern clime,
Where endless summer fills the time,
Still points its index finger forth
To the chill mountains of the north,
. As if its heart was there.
So these, if placed in marble halls,
Far distant from their native walls,

PHILANTHROPY

Had felt their hearts, in grief and gloom,
Still yearning for their woodland home,
 And sunken in despair,
And thought how, when they used to dwell
Within their little clay-built cell,
 They lived in freedom there.

1860

Philanthropy

I AM on good terms
With mortals and worms—
 They are the same fabric as I.
But yet, I care not.
If they both go to pot
 I neither will blubber nor cry.

1853

Human Life

A FEW short years shall come and go,
When in the dust we'll lie;
Our lives are as a shooting glow
Upon the midnight sky.

It gleams a moment on its way,
Then melts in azure space,
And, of the brightness of its ray,
It leaves no single trace.

The magic light springs up at night
Above the marshy plain,
And gleams, a while, with baleful light,
Then sinks to earth again.

'T is thus we take our rise from dust,
And dust, thus, awhile we burn,
Until the moment when we must
Back to the dust return.

To him who journeys o'er the sand
Of Africa's desert wide,
Delusive pictures take their stand
Around on every side.

He sees broad lakes before him spread,
With verdant palm trees lined,
And their green branches overhead
In motion by the wind.

HUMAN LIFE

'T is thus false hopes too often take
 Our visionary sight,
And, when we almost reach them, break
 And turn to darkness quite.

The Spring comes on, then, lovelier still,
 The Summer, soft and green,
Last, Autumn browns the vale and hill,
 And saddens all the scene.

So come our boyhood and our youth,
 And manhood's happy prime;
Then trembling age at last, and Death,
 Our exit from the stage of Time.

185

Lines

I WISH I were again a boy,
With free and careless brow—
For then, at least, I had more joy
Than soothes my spirit now.
Those days are gone, forever fled,
The friends I knew and loved are dead.
And those who loved me, too, are gone
To slumber 'neath the silent stone.
Some sleep beneath a foreign sky,
I know not where their ashes lie.

And many a scalding tear I give
Over their hapless lot,
And those who died and those who live
Shall never be forgot.
Their names are rendered dear to me
By many a scene in memory.
With them I wept, with them I played
On sunny hills, in greenwood shade,
Or bounded in the light canoe
Along the winding river's blue.

But all alike have passed away,
I view them now no more;
They've left my sight, this many a day,
By the creek and river shore,
And other friends are linked with me
In manhood's heartless sympathy.

INES TO EUNICE

But memory reverts her gaze
Towards my fair infantile days,
And drags from out their moldering urn
The joys that never will return.

Cincinnati, May 4, 1855

Lines to Eunice

EUNICE, that little head so brown,
Those eyelashes drooping down,
Those rosy cheeks and darting eyes
Make new and strange emotions rise—
Pleasing, yet ending, all in pain.
For, while I sigh, I sigh in vain,
My rival, Henric, claims thy charms,
And clasps thee in a husband's arms.

1857

To the Evening Star

SWEET, lovely orb who gleams above,
My spirit turns to thee in love—
When over sorrowing thoughts I brood,
In silence and in solitude,
Or wander on the lonely shore,
Or where, down hill, the torrents pour,
When far removed from mortal view,
From out thy depths of melting blue,
Thy mournful gaze is on me still,
With more a look of good than ill.
And I, a pilgrim here below,
Enduring many a secret woe,
From whom the light of Love is flown
And Friendship's milder glory gone,
Now turns to thee his wandering eye
And seeks thy silent sympathy.
If I believed the spangled heaven,
So red with burning stars at even,
Was an unfolded scroll on high,
The azure page of Destiny,
 And every planet's burning glare
That glimmers thro' blue midnight's gloom,
Prognostic of some mortal's doom,
 Was but a fiery sentence there,
Then would I joy to think that mine,
Thou bashful light, was writ in thine.
If every star 's a place of rest,
The peaceful "Islands of the Blest,"

TO THE EVENING STAR

I would not fear to lose my breath
And pass the shadowy vale of death.
Then will my unchained spirit trace,
On seraph wings, the realms of space.
O! then how quickly will I come
And choose thee for my future home.

Cincinnati, May 5, 1855

Lines

THE purple light of evening
Is fading in the west;
The woods are dimly darkening,
The bird has sought her nest.

The stars are up, the moon grows bright
The midnight hastens on.
I seek my home, she is not mine,
My latest hope is gone.

Yet, still, the rosy twilight
Around each tree-top glows,
Though every trunk around me
A fainter shadow throws.

While I stand here, in waiting
For her who does not come,
While I have been a wanderer,
Hath she remained at home?

Is she in yonder mansion,
Where once she used to dwell,
When in my early boyhood
I felt her beauty's spell?

She had that childish artlessness,
That purity of soul,
That waked within my spirit
A love that spurned control.

_LINES

I fought the wars in Palestine,
I envy those who fell,
'T were manliness to die for Christ
Before the infidel.

The Tempest

THE storm was loud on Galilee,
The waves rolled dark and high,
A gloom had fallen on the sea,
The blast rushed whistling by.

The shivering sails are rent apart,
The mast yields to its power;
And fear had seized on every heart
In that tremendous hour.

But Jesus did not heed the clouds,
The winds, or waving sea,
He heeded not the shivering shrouds,
For fast asleep was he.

Then came his followers to him,
And spoke, with words of fear:
“Lord, save us, for we perish,
Why art thou sleeping here?”

Then Jesus spoke: “Give up your fear,
O ye of little faith!
How can you, when your Lord is near,
Thus heed the ocean’s wrath?

And he rebuked the leaden sky,
And bid its lightnings cease.
He stretched his hand across the sea,
Its billows sank in peace.

THE TEMPEST

Disciples, O! how could ye doubt,
Or ask for proof again?
It surely is the Son of God,
Who thus can rule the main.

Thus, when the cares of life awake
The tempests of our soul,
Our Father, grant the saving aid
Of Thy divine control!

Till every passion lulled to rest,
Our breasts grow full of thee,
And, o'er our spirits, comes a calm
Like that on Galilee!

1856

Fragment

A SHIPWRECK

THE fated ship, before the gale,
With rigging rent, and ragged sail,
Is driven, in its headlong course,
By wind and water's mingled force.
And vain is all the pilot's skill,
The tempest guides her at its will.
Now lifted on the billows high,
Her masthead mingles with the sky.
Then, viewed by lightning's fitful glow,
She plunges to the depths below.
The yellow, dashing, foaming tides
Are lashed to spray against her sides,
And, thrown upon the highest deck,
Drenches, in brine, the laboring wreck—
And, through the strained hull's gaping seams
The hissing ocean pours in streams.

Now, from the distance, rising clear,
The sound of breakers greets the ear.
All hope is lost; the sailors wait,
In breathless silence, for their fate.
And, by a transient gleam, their eyes
See horrid rocks before them rise.
Another moment, all is dark,
And, hurled on high, the shattered bark

FRAGMENT

Descends upon them; far and wide
The broken fragments strew the tide.
Their cries for aid are all in vain,
Unheard amidst the roaring main,
And, yielding to the maddened wave,
They sink, and fill a seaman's grave.

Cincinnati, March, 1859

Lines to Kabine

KABINE, your diabolean hole
Has ruined many a young man's soul.
There, they drink the worst of beer
Till their senses disappear.
The rifle whiskey that they get,
The stoutest mule would overset.
There, is heard the drunken howl,
There, breaks forth the midnight growl
Its dilapidated walls
Are the scene of fights and brawls.
In it, we're not afraid to bet,
Some one will be murdered yet.

'T is strange the watchmen of the beat
Do n't lug you up to Hammond Street
Arraigned before the frowning judge,
All your excuses would be fudge.
You'd exercise your lies in vain
The work of Justice to restrain.
The judge, with face severe, would say
"Take the foul, drunken brute away
And lead him to the dens below,
Nor let him thence for one month go;
In Marshal Robinson's hotel
We 'll let him have a taste of hell."

LINES TO KABINE

In *Æsop*'s pages, you may read
How once a wolf of subtile breed,
Among a flock of sheep did stray,
And seemed to be the same as they.
The wolf, he had a sheepskin on,
And all his wolfish look was gone.
The shepherd, with a cunning eye,
Right soon beheld the treachery.
He seized him by his woolly hide,
And round his neck a rope he tied,
One end above a branch he threw,
And then the noose he tightened, too,
With rage depicted in his eye,
He swung the howling brute on high.

So you, in sheepish garb arrayed,
Your dwelling in the place have made.
As decent, for a time, you passed,
But we have found you out at last.
And we, perhaps, may give to you
A most extensive trotting through.
Judge Lynch is here with us, by far
Most influential at the bar.
Vacate your dog hole quick, and run,
Or something monstrous will be done!

I should not wonder, if you stayed in town
The folks would tear your kennel down,
Break up your barrels, drink your beer,
And order you to move from here.

LINES TO KABINE

Upon a rail they 'll let you ride,
With a tar and feather hide.
Ah, Kabine! that hide will stick so close
You can not easy cast it loose.
For rum, it can't be pawned away,
'T will keep you warm for many a day.
Take my advice, fly hence! in time,
I speak the truth, although in rhyme!

1858

Apollo and Daphne

Dramatis Personae

Cupid,
Apollo,
Mercury,
Venus,
Daphne

CUPID

WOULD, in some unlucky hour,
I might find it in my power
To make proud Phœbus writhe and smart
Beneath my far extending dart!
He seems to scorn my puny strength,
But ah! a time will come at length,
A time, and at no distant day,
When he will think a different way.
Because the arrow from his bow
Hath chanced to lay the Python low,
His heart is brimming full of pride,
All feelings crowded out beside.
For this, alone, I do not care,
But that at me he dares to sneer,
And mocks at every weak attempt
With most ineffable contempt.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

But amply will I have revenge,
If once he comes in shooting range
Of this good bow; a dart like this
Will not be very apt to miss.
With such a marksman, too, as I,
Who has the skill to make it fly
So truly as to hit a hair,
He hardly can take too much care.

APOLLO

Not vainly, have I tried to prove
Myself a genuine child of Jove.
Against my valor and my skill,
The Python vainly strove, and fell.
Now, moldering alone, he lies
Beneath the rude, inconstant skies.
Little he thought to bite the dust;
Crissa has 'scaped a dreadful pest.
Since when broad Ocean's surging tide
Rolled over Terra, far and wide,
And Pyrrho and Deucalion stood,
Close by the fast receding flood,
On Parnass' top, and sent above
Their thanks to flight bestowing Jove,
Foul Python hath a terror been,
To waste and scourge the world of sin.
But I have bade this evil cease,
And Delphi hails returning peace.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

MERCURY

Thou hast done much, this action's praise
Should be sent down to other days.
Not one of all the Gods above—
 Not Pluto, of the shades below,
 Where Styx's leaden waters flow
 In leaden currents, dark and slow,
Not even earth creating Jove
Could send so vile a pest again,
To desolate the homes of men.
But were I thee, a temple high,
Pointing toward the silent sky,
 Should upward, from the green earth, swell
 To mark the spot where Python fell,
A monument of victory.

APOLLO

This, by my father, Jove, I'll do.
 The fane shall rear,
 Aloft in air,
Its spires toward the depths of blue.
And here, in Delphi's woody gloom,
Henceforth shall be my chiefest home.
My spirit shall inspire the place,
And unto many of mortal race
The mazy future shall be shown,
As well as actors past and gone.

Apollo and Daphne

There, many a lovesick youth will try
To read his hapless destiny,
And, with my strong, inspiring aid,
Not vainly, will he woo his maid.

MERCURY

You're Loxias now, how can you give
What you yourself did never have?
You, who have failed one heart to move,
To talk of righting other's love.

APOLLO

Hermes, you judge me not aright,
In love I have received no slight.

MERCURY

You have n't! but, by Lerna's lake,
I'm laboring 'neath a sad mistake
If thrice you have not tried, in vain,
The hearts of some I know, to gain.

APOLLO

Who were they? Come, speak out and tell!

MERCURY

You know; you are an oracle.

APOLLO

You speak in riddles that I can not guess.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

MERCURY

So, then, your weakness you confess.

APOLLO

I fail your meaning, but, I will declare,
Not for the depth of art that's there.

MERCURY

I speak no riddles; to be plain,
Thrice has your courtship been in vain.

APOLLO

Tell me the name, at least of one,
And let our argument be done.

MERCURY

Well, of Batina I will tell;
She loved you most exceeding well.
Romantic was her death; she died
Beneath the crystal river's tide,
Rather than yield to you her love,
So much did you her passions move.
But, look there! sitting in the shade
 Is Daphne, solitary in the grove,
In truth she is a lovely maid.
 Why do n't you go and win her love?

APOLLO

Daphne would hardly look at me.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

MERCURY

You yield by far too easily,
A moment back, and one would think
To hear you talk, that, by a wink,
The haughtiest maid that ever pressed
Our mighty mother's verdant breast
You'd mould completely to your will.
So vaunted you, upon your skill.

APOLLO

I did not vaunt—I only said
I'd like to see that iron maid
Whom I have ever loved in vain.

MERCURY

If yonder Daphne you can gain,
I will acknowledge that you are
Not so unfortunate, by far,
In love affairs, as I had thought.

APOLLO

Not easily will she be wrought.
But I must go, the sun declines,
More and more slantingly he shines.

(exit Apollo)

MERCURY

What strength self confidence can give,
'T is more than energy; we strive,

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

Who have it, with a youthful strength,
Tho' envious, wasting time, at length,
Has bleached, with many a Winter's snow,
Our silver hairs, and stamped our brows
With many a mark; while those who want
This helping sentiment may toil and pant,
From blooming youth to helpless age,
Their lives a weary pilgrimage.
Much as I feel contempt for vanity,
Still 't is a pleasant sight to me
To see one on himself depend,
Feeling himself his trustiest friend.

CUPID

Now is my chance. I'll glut my hate.
Come, my good bow, the range is great,
Yet thou hast sailed an arrow o'er
A greater space than this before;
Directed by my skillful arm,
Thou 'lt do my foes a deal of harm.
Aid me, my mother! tho' 't is dark,
A skillful shot may strike the mark.

VENUS

I grant my aid and blessing too,
The will and courage rest with you.
Put on the string the golden shaft
At which he hath so often laughed.
Now pull, with all strength, the springy bow,
Measure the mark, and now let go!

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

CUPID

Heaven! how swift that arrow flew!
It whizzes thro' the ether blue;
Straight is its course; the mark is struck.
Now, Phœbus, wail, and curse your luck,
Confess that he thou didst despise
Hath skillful hands and wary eyes!

APOLLO

O! Father Jove, what—what is this
That comes with such a sharp, quick whiz
And wounds me to the very heart!
A glittering shaft, a golden dart.
O! heaven above! some secret foe
Is trailing my lone footsteps now.
Avenging Jove, extend your aid,
And guide me thro' the gathering shade!
And Themis, thou who wert to me
A nurse and friend in infancy,
On thee I call, for, wounded sore,
I suffer pangs unknown before.
Here am I, friendless and alone,
By craft of hidden foes o'erthrown.
Wounded to death, I sink, I die
Unseen, and far from sympathy.
O! Father Jove, whose universal sight
Recks not for sunshine or the gloom of night
But views alike the fiery glow
Of Etna's burning lakes, whose flow,

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

With lurid and intensest flame,
Chars and torments the writhing frame
Of thy gigantic Titan foe,
Whom thou hast prisoned there below,
Or the illimitable Ocean's floor,
Let this close peril hustle o'er!
O! yes, I see that even now
Thy influence warms my heart and brow;
Chill terror flies, and strength again
Courses thro' every half-chilled vein.
But I will leave this direful place.
Who may he be, of mortal race
Or of Olympian gods, whose arm
Is lifted up to do me harm?
Fain would I know, unnerving fear
Else will pursue me everywhere,
Of that most wasting, torturing kind,
Formless and blank and undefined,
With which the hell-born sisterhood
Scourge those with hands imbrued in blood
(*walks off*)

VENUS

Well done, my child! that shot was good.
He took it in no laughing mood,
He'll truly find, before he's done,
Your darts are equal to his own,
And, if my judgment prove not wrong,
He'll feel the painful wound ere long.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

CUPID

Look how he walks! (I hate him so)
And how, aloft, he holds his bow,
As if he would shoot down all foes
Who dare his footsteps to oppose.
But see! he turns, his wandering eye
Discerns the lovely Daphne nigh.
The poison works, I plainly see;
He looks on her admiringly.

VENUS

This instant he may but admire,
But yet his veins, with liquid fire,
Shall burn with true adoring love,
And, vainly, will he strive to move
The maid, whose cold, indifferent heart
Shall yield not to his boasted art.
Her soul is braced upon the chase;
Of Love for him I see no trace.
She loves the mossy rocks and woods,
Or tumbling cascade's frothing floods,
The silver river, deep and wide,
The narrow vale, or mountain side;
Harsh to the beasts of shaggy dress,
Wild dweller of the wilderness.

CUPID

She flies at his approach, I know,
As I have oft seen damsels do

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

From those desired to pursue,
But Phœbus hath the power to win,
If earnestly he once begin,
For he is fair to please the sight,
Proportioned well, and tall and straight.
Look at his face and wavy hair,
And say no charms are lurking there.
Those features are the purest Greek,
(The parted lips appear to speak),
With every separate loveliness
That aught that's Godlike may possess.
O! my revenge is not complete,
Some other thing is wanting yet.
If I have made proud Phœbus burn
With love that Daphne will return,
My plans are bungling, void of skill,
I've given joy, instead of ill.
O mother!

VENUS

Call not on me to save,
When you yourself the power have.
Where have you placed your leaden dart?
'T will render vain Apollo's art,
Nor will the fickle nymph be won,
If Jove himself should aid his son.
But see! he hath approached the maid
Beneath that oak tree's quivering shade,

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

APOLLO

Sweet Daphne! long, in secret, I
Have given the winds my futile sigh.
Long has my heart, in secret, burned
From pure affection, unreturned.

DAPHNE

What cruel maid, with patent art,
Hath stolen from thee thy manly heart,
And filled thy spirit with despair,
Revenge, and jealousy, and care,
Allowing thee, alone, to brood
O'er cursed wrongs, in solitude?

APOLLO

She is a simple huntress maid,
Her home is in the woodland shade.
Her have I seen, with bow and spear,
Hotly pursue the panting deer,
Dead to the love of mortal men,
Delighting in some savage glen.
Her days, monotonous and slow,
Destroy the beauty on her brow.
Nor man, as yet, nor God above,
Have ever waked her heart to love,
But woman's heart is known to you,
For thou thyself art woman, too.
Advise me, therefore, what to do.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

DAPHNE

'T is not a thing to teach and learn;
Your own true judgment will discern
A better way. Tell your beloved
With what a passion you are moved;
Detail to her, how she inspires
Your soul with more than Etna's fires.

APOLLO

This will I do, but yet I fear
Her ears may not incline to hear.
What if, perchance, she say, that I
Am but a friend, O! sad reply,
Or even worse, another one
Possessed her youthful heart alone.

DAPHNE

Fair Fortune ever aids the brave,
On earth, or on the rolling wave,
In times of war, or when sweet peace
Hath bid the deadly strife to cease.
When towns repay the victor's arts,
Or when the lighter prize is hearts,
Fortune alike exerts her power
And aids the brave to win the hour.

APOLLO

Is Fortune friendly to the brave?
Then should I feel her power to save,

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

For none beneath the concave sky
Have aught of courage more than I;
And I might almost say, above,
Saving alone my father, Jove.
The impious Titans sought to gain
His throne in heaven, but strove in vain.
Black thunder and fierce lightnings hurled
Have swept them from the upper world.
One, on Caucasus, bleak and bare,
The sport of windy sky and air,
Extended lies, held by a lock
Of ad'mant and eternal rock.
Another, Typhon, with his hell-born soul,
Burnt by Jove's lightnings to a coal,
Who, in Sicilian caverns dim,
Defied all heaven, alas for him!
Now lies supine, his daring breast
By Etna's burning entrails pressed.
I, too, possess a heart of fire;
What marvel? sprung from such a sire!
But of my acts I need not tell,
Thou knowest by whom the Python fell.

DAPHNE

More shame to thee! to thus prevail,
Yet in a simple courtship fail—
Thou who hath slain the vilest pest
That ever sprung from Earth's green breast
Go tell her all! there is no maid,
Of loving words who is afraid—

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

But who's the maid, and what her name
That wastes thee with this tender flame?

APOLLO

I'd tell thee, but, somehow, I fear
'T will both surprise and vex your ear.

DAPHNE

Out with it, for I do declare
That who she is I little care.

APOLLO

Well, well, then Daphne is her name,
Whose beauty sets my heart aflame.

DAPHNE

What Daphne? who, and what is she?
Your meaning, yet, I hardly see.

APOLLO

To bring things plainer to your view,
That Daphne is none else than you.

DAPHNE

Shame! were your Delian mother here,
How promptly she would box your ear;
For 'proaching, with pretended love,
A damsel in the nightly grove.

Apollo and Daphne

APOLLO

Pretended love!—by father Jove,
Whose word is law in heaven above;
By Styx's waters, foul and drear,
An oath that all the gods revere;
These words I speak are trebly true,
I live, I speak, I breathe for you.
To prove that love's sincerity
For thee, I would not dread to die.

DAPHNE

What! dost thou say the gentle fire
That I within thy breast inspire
Commands thee, so that thou wilt do
Whatever deed I ask thee to?

APOLLO

Yes! truly, I am but thy slave;
For thee I'd dare the Stygian wave,
And exercise my father's might
To drag vile Cerberus to the light,
To rend the horn and ivory gates,
And loomless, make the sister Fates.

DAPHNE

Well, go then to the shades below,
Where never light presumes to glow,
Dismiss sad Ixion from the gloom,
And turn his wheel till I shall come.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

APOLLO

Sad day! I now perceive that I
Have wasted all my gallantry.
The love that long in secret burned
Must, after all, be unreturned.
But Daphne, tell me ere I go—
An exile in my utter woe—
Is there no corner of thy heart
Where I, perchance, may claim a part?
If thou dost hate me, tell it, speak!
My ear shall hear, though heart shall break
If I remain thy lover still,
What will my fate be? good or ill?

DAPHNE

Divine thyself! for thou canst see
Into the dark futurity.

APOLLO

My prophecy points out success,
But thou hast power to alter this.
If I thy fickle heart can move
To render back one-half my love,
Not fortune, though her power be great,
Can bless, in aught, my happy state.

DAPHNE

So long as I possess thy love
I'll envy not the gods above.

APOLLO AND DAPHNE

Let not thy feelings range from me,
And mine will ever cling to thee,
As long as stars in ether glow,
As long as streams to ocean flow.

CUPID

See her bright eyes, how they shine!
Hateful Phœbus, she is thine.
Would to heaven! I could destroy,
Instantly, thy promised joy!

VENUS

Cupid, stretch thy springy bow,
Fit the leaden arrow now!
Soon Apollo's vain success
Shall become as nothingness.
Take thy aim—the arrow flies—
It strikes—and see! the damsel's eyes,
In their dark, impulsive glow,
Less of admiration show.
What, just then, inspired love,
Now, can but aversion move.

A Character-Fragment

THERE was a youth who dwelt within
A broad-built city of the West.
His ears were used to hear the din
Of business that could know no rest.
 His heart, e'en in his early youth,
Became familiar with the ways of men—
 Less with their virtues than their want
 of truth—
And judged alike the million and the ten.

And rumors were afloat of him,
 Which, had they truth to back them up,
Would leave his reputation rather slim.
 And friends advised him, oft, to stop
 And mend his ways and contradict
Their lies (they said) which sullied his fair
 name.
 He did not heed, abased and wrecked,
He plunged still deeper into shame.

Lines

MEMORY OF THE LATE DR. THOMAS CARROLL

WE miss thee in the walks of life,
And in the ways of men,
And long the void thy absence makes
Will in our hearts remain.

The mansion and the lowly cot
Shall long lament thy end;
For both alike in thee have lost
A counselor and friend.

In hours of danger and distress
Thou wert their constant stay;
And sweet voiced Charity found thee
Her servant every day.

Thou hast not fallen in the Spring
Or summer of thy prime;
For long thy manly brow has borne
The Winter marks of time.

Fate measured out thy full career,
And when thy summons came,
Thy Father's purpose was fulfilled,
And we must bless his name.

_LINES

For in the honor of good works
Thy spirit took its leave,
And thy clear record hath no spot
To blame or to forgive.

The seeds of many a gentle act,
Along thy life-path strewed,
Have grown in many a humble spot
To flowers of gratitude.

And some, whose eyes may view the spot
Wherein thy silent ashes sleep,
May cast those flowers upon thy grave
And turn away to weep.

Long shall the graces of the man
The theme in Friendship's circle be,
While mourning science shall lament
Her fallen votary.

And on thy tomb, they well may say,
Who knew thy life and mind and heart,
"Here lies a man who in his day
Hath acted well his part."

Cincinnati, March 13, 1871

Appendix

The Meteor Steed

WHEN the signal bell was rung,
Forward on the track he sprung.
The charioteer then touched the thong,
When, rolled the ponderous train along.
With one loud, wild, and piercing neigh
He bounded on his winding way.
On, hissing, went o'er bridge and brake,
Where oft had rushed the hissing snake.
From out the bush, the partridge whirred,
Affrighted, flew the timid bird.
The Eagle, from her rock on high,
Sent forth a loud and piercing cry—
Then swiftly to her eyrie flew
To guard her young as near he drew.
She whet her beak on flinty rock,
Prepared herself for battle shock,
Then gave one loud, defiant shriek
When by he went like lightning streak.
And on, with speed of wind, he flew,
With graceful ease, the train he drew.
Here, his wild neigh, loud, shrill, and clear
Started from copse the mountain deer.
The roaming tenants of the wood,
Affrighted, ran, or, trembling, stood.

THE METEOR STEED

Alarmed, within his secret lair,
Arose and fled the prowling bear.
The stealthy wolves, that miscreant clan,
Rush, howling; to their coverts ran.
Fiercest of which in forest roam,
The wildcat, seemed, in mountain home,
Jealous of all who dare invade
Her lonely haunts in mountain shade.
Madly she sprang from limb to limb,
Rushed o'er the track, for leap at him.
She made the bound, but missed her aim
And lit a mile behind the train.
Poor, foolish puss! to make such dash,
And think to catch a lightning flash.
The fires within his bosom burned,
And, round, the heated axles turned.
The thieving fox forbore to prowl,
And, silent, sits the boding owl.
The buzzards winged their circling flight
Around the mountain's topmost hight,
While, in these solitudes profound,
The shades of evening fell around.
When night her sable wings unfurled
And spread her mantle o'er the world,
What need of light, while, in his ire,
His eyeball shone like blazing fire!
He, through the pitchy darkness, dove
Like flaming thunderbolts of Jove.
And on he went, with thundering sound,
Measuring his length with every bound,

THE METEOR STEED

On, through the mountain's deep defiles,
And through the valley's silent wilds,
And on, and onward, drew the train,
Whose echoing thunder shook the plain;
And on, and on; his meteor gleam
Paled only with the morning beam.
As arrow from the bow is sent
As swiftly to his goal he went;
More swift and fleet than mountain hind,
And beautiful, this sired of mind.
Such was the steed, and this my lay;
He rolled me o'er his winding way.
Now thanks to that protecting power
Which kept me safe through danger's hour!

Samuel Ogden

John C—

ON Fairmount's misty hills of clay
How sweet the wild birds sing,
How mournful sounds the sweeping winds
That through its forests ring.

On Fairmount's misty hills of clay
Death hath cast a gloom,
For old John C—'s passed away
To realms beyond the tomb.

And ne'er again at dusk of day
We'll see him homeward walk;
No more upon his winding way
He'll stop with friends to talk.

We'll miss the tales he used to tell,
His voice so full of cheer.
To all except himself he was
An honest friend sincere.

The good he had we will applaud,
And hold in memory dear,
But let his faults and weakness claim
Forgiveness and a tear.

Although the social glass he did
With friends too freely fill,
Yet in his honest heart there was
Much good and little ill.

To Ida S—

And now when round the nightly bar,
For drinks convened we stand,
We fill our glasses to his health
In a far better land.

C. A. O.

To Ida S—

WHERE the ivy green is creeping
And flowers wildly bloom,
Ida, calm in death, is sleeping
Within the silent tomb.

When summer birds were warbling,
The day was bright and fair;
Around her grave all weeping,
To rest they laid her there.

Sleep on! thou withered flower,
Thou wert thy parents' love.
Like mist before the sunbeam's power
Thy spirit passed above.

C. A. .

Intemperance

DRINK not of the sparkling glass
That flows with ruddy wine;
The joy it yields will quickly pass
And a throbbing heart be thine.

Beware of the drunkard's doom,
His wayward, staggering gait;
His life is one of gloom,
An early grave his fate.

Hast thou not seen his wife forlorn,
As she, trembling, waits his form to meet
Ill-clad, in garments torn,
With hardly shoes upon his feet!

Hast thou not heard the stifled cry
On the cold and wintry blast,
As, by his dark abode of misery,
With quickened step you passed!

Beware! for many a noble mind
Has been ungulfed by the liquid flame,
Who might have left on earth behind
An honored and immortal name.

C. A. O.

Lines

O! do n't you remember the boys, my friends,
The boys so young and gay,
Who met, with delight at the coming of night,
In the old bar-room to play!

And do n't you remember the barkeeper!
How merry and happy was he,
When, over the counter, we shook the dice
To see whose the drinks would be.

And do n't you remember Joe Pons, my friends
How jolly and full of play,
When around the bar in a crowd we stood,
And Joe for the drinks would pay!

Alas! we made a woeful start
In childhood's earliest day,
A few short years will pass, and we
In drunkard's graves will lay.

The fleeting years will bear away
The mem'ry of our boyish hours,
While, in the old graveyard, we lie
Asleep beneath the flowers.

O! that our youthful steps had been
But turned the other way,
Long life and honor had been ours,
Instead of swift decay.

The Death of Lincoln

OUR foundering bark has lost its guide,
Its banners stream mournfully on the air
The pilot was a nation's pride,
Its banners emblems of his care.

He died amid a weeping throng,
A patriot kind and true;
Death has broke the chain so strong
That Love had wove anew.

And when Life's flickering light grew dim,
By Jordan's shore
A band of angels were there to meet him
And waft him safely o'er.

That night, that fatal night!
Who thought before the morrow
That a single hand alone could blight
And cloud a nation's brow in sorrow!

Go, thou emblem bird!
With pinions wild and free,
And bear the mournful tale thou'st heard
Across the stormy sea.

There comes a voice from o'er the deep,
The wild and briny main,
Which says, "We weep, we weep,
For the martyr, a fiend hath slain."

THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

How grates that voice on traitor's ears,
When people of a foreign clime
Say, "With thee, America, we are in tears
For the martyr guiltless of crime."

He is gone to meet the martyred group
Who sleep beneath the surging billows—
They that sank with the scuttled sloop
And have naught but the sea-rock for pillows.

Moan low! ye balmy winds, so sweet,
From off the flowery plain,
The patriot's heart is forever mute,
The martyr Booth has slain.

And the clouds hung dark, o'er earth a pall,
The sun shed not a single ray,
When I saw him in the martial hall
As there in state he lay.

There I saw Love's mute token,
'T was flowers wreathed together,
That said a nation's heart was broken,
Laid o'er him to wither.

And the dirge, how sad were its sighs,
When from the dark-draped walls its echoes
fell;
I saw tears starting in the passers' eyes
As on the martyr they gazed their last
farewell.

PRAYER FOR AN EASY DEATH

The heavens, too, were weeping,
Their tears were in raindrops shed
For the martyr calmly sleeping
Forever with the dead.

C. A. O.

Prayer for An Easy Death

WHEN death, with his resistless might
And unrelenting hand, shall come
To bid my spirit take its flight
To its eternal home,

As melts the glorious orb of day
Within the purple sky of even—
So, calmly, may I pass away
From the dark earth to heaven.

C. A. O.

